



FINANCIAL SCAMS Frozen fortunes to fund victim compensation

Decides Yunus-led meeting on recovering laundered money

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to create a fund to compensate victims of financial irregularities by using money and assets recovered from alleged embezzlers and money launderers.

Frozen assets of accused individuals, including shares held in various banks and companies, will also be included in the fund, Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur said at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy yesterday.

"We have already seized substantial sums stashed in

➤ Money, assets recovered from alleged embezzlers, launderers to be used

➤ Frozen assets include money in banks, company shares

various banks by individuals under investigation or facing trial. We've also taken control of shares owned by fugitives and those facing charges," he said.

The governor said the fund would be used in the public interest, with priority on the compensation to victims, chiefly depositors hurt by financial wrongdoings. It will also offer some relief to the poor, he said.

The briefing was held after a high-level meeting on anti-money laundering issues, repatriation of laundered money, and progress on the measures taken so far. Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus chaired the meeting at his residence, Jamuna.

The meeting also discussed how the seized assets could be transferred to the proposed fund and managed with transparency.

While talking about progress made by the joint team to investigate 10 business groups and ousted prime minister

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Supporters of BNP leader Ishraque Hossain continue their sit-in demonstration outside the Dhaka South City Corporation headquarters for the fifth consecutive day yesterday, demanding that Ishraque be sworn in as mayor.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DHAKA SOUTH MAYOR Protesters step up push for Ishraque

People suffer as Gulistan road blocked

DIPAN NANDY and HELEMUL ALAM

Supporters of BNP leader Ishraque Hossain have ramped up their demonstrations demanding he be sworn in as the Dhaka South City Corporation mayor immediately.

For the fifth consecutive day yesterday, they kept Nagar Bhaban blocked, causing the suspension of 28 civic-service deliveries from there.

They, under the banner of "Dhakabashi", also blocked the one part of road from Golapshah Mazar intersection to Bangabazar intersection for six hours from 10:00am, causing commuters to suffer.

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Economists rue lack of economic reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Economists yesterday expressed disappointment over what they said was the interim government's indifference towards implementing reforms recommended in the white paper on the state of the Bangladesh economy and in taskforce reports on economic strategies.

"We have not been noticing any major initiative about the recommendations in the government," said Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling.

Raihan's comment came at a discussion on

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... Those involved in the system of looting included politicians, who have now fled, business groups, who have become subdued, but the bureaucrats have now become reinvigorated.

DEBAPRIYA BHATTACHARYA



Star INTERVIEW

Betting on a leaner budget

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed says the govt will reduce budget deficit significantly, prioritise local job creation

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh's interim government is preparing a tighter budget to rein in the fiscal deficit while boosting job creation and stabilising the economy amid mounting debt concerns.

"It's not that we won't borrow from

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Shakil makes HISTORY

Walks to top of Everest from Cox's Bazar beach in 84 days

STAR REPORT

He has done it, and that too under 90 days.

Bangladeshi mountaineer Ikramul Hasan Shakil yesterday successfully summited Mount Everest, the world's highest peak, after walking around 1,400 kilometres from the shores of the Bay of Bengal in Cox's Bazar in just 84 days, completing his Sea to Summit expedition.

According to his Nepali expedition agency, 8K Expeditions, the 31-year-old Shakil stood atop the 8,848 metre Mount Everest -- the world's highest peak -- hoisting the flag of Bangladesh around 6:30am yesterday.

"Just received the news -- Shakil

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CAAB rejoinder, our reply

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) has sent a rejoinder to two reports published in The Daily Star titled "Licence to fly: Regulator repeatedly ignored red flags" and "Licence to fly: Pilots faked flying records" on May 11 and May 12, 2025 respectively. Below is the full unedited rejoinder followed by our reply.

Rejoinder

1. The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), as the national regulatory body for civil aviation and a dedicated member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) since 1973, operates under a clear mandate to ensure the safety, security, efficiency, and sustainability of

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UN team planning Dhaka visit

Eyeing talks on enforced disappearances

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances is planning to visit Dhaka to engage with stakeholders on the ground and discuss existing challenges.

A newsletter of the Working Group on its most recent session held in Bangkok, Thailand, said yesterday that the Working Group started discussions on technical cooperation with Bangladesh and its Commission for Inquiry on Enforced Disappearance in 2024.

As part of the technical cooperation, the Working Group met with the members of the commission on a few occasions.

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ডিসক্রিট: ঔষধ প্রশাসন অধিদপ্তরের অনুমোদনক্রমে প্রচারিত। ক) রেজিস্টার্ড চিকিৎসকের ব্যবস্থাপনায় ব্যক্তিগত আনুষঙ্গিক বিক্রয় দ্রুত পূরণ করে।
খ) ঔষধ ক্রয়ের সময় মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণের তারিখ দেখে নিন। মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণ ঔষধ ক্রয়, বিক্রয় ও ব্যবহার থেকে বিরত থাকুন।

Russia bans Amnesty Int'l Accuses it of backing Kyiv against Moscow

REUTERS

Russia's prosecutor general said yesterday it had banned human rights group Amnesty International Limited as an "undesirable organisation", accusing it of backing Ukraine against Russia.

Founded in 1961 and headquartered in London, Amnesty International campaigns for human rights across the world, including on behalf of those it designates prisoners of conscience.

In its statement, Russia's prosecutor general said that Amnesty International Limited's London office was a "centre for the preparation of global Russophobic projects", and accused it of advocating on behalf of Ukraine, with which Russia is at war.

It accused Amnesty of: "doing everything possible to intensify the military confrontation in the region. They justify the crimes of Ukrainian neo-Nazis, call for an increase in their funding, and insist on the political and economic isolation of our country."



Demanding a ban on battery-run autorickshaws, pedal rickshaw pullers demonstrate outside the Ashwini Kumar Hall in Barisal city yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Economists rue lack of economic reforms

FROM PAGE 1

"Bangladesh Economy 2025-26: Policy Reform and National Budget" organised by the Citizens' Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, at the Lakeshore Hotel in Dhaka.

An anti-reform sentiment is noticed among the political elites, business community and the bureaucrats, although reforms were the aspirations of the interim government, said Raihan, also a professor at the University of Dhaka's economics department.

Despite some signs of economic stabilisation, such as a slight easing of inflation and stability in the foreign exchange market, Bangladesh's broader economic reform trajectory remains hampered by structural weaknesses and governance shortcomings, said Debapriya Bhattacharya, the convenor of Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh.

The government has paid little attention to economic reforms compared to other types of reform.

"Our general grievance is that the government pays far more attention to other reforms than it does to economic reforms. This is a major problem, but they fail to realise its gravity."

If there is no comfort in the economy, no other reform will be able to sustain itself, said Bhattacharya,

also a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

"We are not seeing the kind of structural transformation or reduction in anti-equity bias that would signal a meaningful shift in economic management.

"... Those involved in the system of looting included politicians, who have now fled, business groups, who have become subdued, but the bureaucrats have now become reinvigorated," he added.

Zahid Hussain, former lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office, said the quality of assets of the troubled banks should be reviewed before the end of this government's term to create a model in the banking sector.

Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow of the CPD, said the government should allocate an amount in the budget to facilitate the recovery of the stolen assets.

"Because the government will have to lodge cases in different countries to recover the stolen assets."

The government can recover the stolen assets through three ways: recovering the money directly, selling the assets of the money launderers and stopping hundi, he said.

AK Enamul Haque, director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, said that spending in the services sector needs

to be increased.

For instance, more hospitals were built, but nurses were not appointed adequately, he said, while recommending a freeze on tax rate hike this year to coax the business committee to invest.

Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, a standing committee member of BNP, said the interim government has been following "the fascist government model" to prepare the budget.

"They are doing everything in a stop-gap measure," he said, adding that the job of the interim government is to enable democratic transition.

He criticised the need for the Bangladesh Investment Summit 2025 as foreign investors are unwilling to invest in an uncertain political climate.

"They were asking when the next general election would take place," said Chowdhury, who led the BNP delegation at the summit held on April 7-10.

He also questioned the interim government's flirting with the idea of allowing foreign companies to operate the Chattogram port and giving a humanitarian corridor to the Rohingya.

"These decisions should come from the political government through consultation, considering the sensitivity of those issues."

though slowly," he said. "We hope it will come down to 6.5 percent next year."

The budget will be televised on June 2. A public feedback period will follow, allowing possible revisions before it is finalised and enacted through an ordinance. Some budgetary measures will take effect immediately.

To support its fiscal programme, the government expects to secure approximately \$3.5 billion in budget support from global lenders by June or July. That includes \$1.3 billion from the International Monetary Fund. The total excludes project loans, Ahmed clarified.

In the infrastructure pipeline, the Rooppur nuclear power project is nearing completion. "Rooppur is more than 80 percent complete, and uranium is already in storage," Ahmed said, adding that trial generation is expected to begin by September or October, with one unit slated to become fully operational by year-end. The second unit has reached roughly 60 percent completion.

Ahmed also stressed that the interim government intends to leave behind lasting institutional reforms for the next administration. "One footprint is the NBR - we've split it. That won't be reversed."

He pointed to several key structural reforms introduced through new ordinances. One outlines how troubled banks can be restructured or liquidated to safeguard depositors. "The ordinance aims to ensure that people's savings and deposits are protected, and that there's a clear process for returning them," said Ahmed.

Another ordinance aims to improve transparency in the public accounts of authorities. A separate regulation ensures that official statistics are published without political interference. "There will be a committee; they will work independently; nobody will interfere with the figures they provide," Ahmed said.

Spring heat breaks records in Central Asia

AFP, Bishkek

Central Asia has been in the grip of a heatwave this spring, with all five countries reporting abnormally high - and in some cases record-breaking - temperatures over the past three months.

The five ex-Soviet states that make up the region are particularly vulnerable to global warming.

Many work in the agricultural sector, which is already grappling with water shortages, while drought conditions have threatened harvests and hydropower generation.

Yunus to visit UK

FROM PAGE 12

diplomatic source in Dhaka.

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman is now living in London, while deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's sister's family is based in the UK, he said.

Tulip, along with her aunt Sheikh Hasina, mother Sheikh Rehana, brother Radwan Mujib Siddiq Bobby, and sister Azmina Siddiq, has been named in three separate cases filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission in January.

Al Jazeera reported that Bangladesh's former Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury spent more than \$500 million on luxury real estate in London, Dubai and New York but did not declare his overseas assets on his Bangladesh tax returns.

Repatriating laundered money has been an important issue for the interim government as huge amounts have been laundered to different countries over the years, a diplomatic source said.

The UK is an important country when it comes to the Rohingya crisis. Now that the funding for the Rohingya is declining, especially after the USAID funding cut worldwide, Dhaka will try to convince the UK for new funding, both as development aid and investment, sources said.

There are over 600,000 Bangladeshi-origin UK citizens there, making it a strong bond between the two countries. Yunus will be seeking to build a bridge between Bangladesh and the diaspora community through trade, investment and the use of expertise back in Bangladesh, sources said.

Act against advisers

FROM PAGE 12

election by December, saying, "This will uphold your dignity, reassure the public, restore stability, and revive the economy."

He criticised the current situation and questioned the need for an Election Commission if, as one adviser claimed, "a mass uprising" elected them as the government.

"If that's the case, why maintain an electoral system at all?" he asked.

In another event in Dhaka, BNP Standing Committee member Nazrul Islam Khan said the party would never reach a compromise with the Awami League.

"We will not do it, and if anyone else tries, we will resist them too," he said during a discussion at the Jatiya Press Club.

Meanwhile, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman said the party plans to develop ward-wise playgrounds in Dhaka if it comes to power in the next election, reports UNB.

"The playground will be developed on three to four bighas of land at least between two wards where children can play, elderly people can walk, and people can breathe fresh air," he said.

Tarique shared the plans while addressing the prize-giving ceremony of the Arafat Rahman Koko Memorial Trust Cricket Tournament at a hotel in London on Sunday.

Frozen fortunes to fund victim compensation

FROM PAGE 1

Sheikh Hasina's family, Mansur said new assets were still being discovered and investigated. "This is an ongoing process."

Cases have been filed based on the assets the authorities have identified so far, and those assets have been seized, he said, without disclosing the amount of the assets.

"Let me give an example, like I had mentioned Islami Bank. Shares worth around Tk 12,000 crore to Tk 15,000 crore are believed to be held there. Similarly, there are shares held in various other banks. As we identify and recover these, we see that there is a significant amount of money in our banking sector that is essentially frozen."

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam at the press briefing said that since the interim government took charge, immovable assets of the 10 groups and Hasina's family worth Tk 1,30,758 crore domestically and \$164.03 million abroad have been attached. Additionally, Tk 42,600 crore movable properties have been frozen.

Mansur said the central bank was working with foreign institutions through mutual legal assistance to recover laundered money.

He said Prof Yunus might take steps related to the recovery process during his London trip scheduled for June 9-13.

"The UK is giving us full support, and their parliamentary committee is assisting us; their experts are providing solutions."

"The Financial Times is supporting us and other newspapers are also helping by publishing various articles in our favour," Mansur said.

"If we look at the US, we are receiving support from there as well. Another country supporting us is Canada. We also have the UAE and Singapore. We have held discussions with the Singaporean government. We spoke to their resident ambassador."

The governor said if Bangladesh can prove that the money involved was indeed taken by the alleged launderers and that the money was illegal, then there is a possibility that the foreign country might cancel their citizenship. "That possibility exists, but it depends on us proving the allegation," he added.

Replying to a question, Mansur said the legal process to bring back laundered money takes around four to five years.

During this time, some intermediate or provisional measures can be taken, for example, freezing the assets that are located abroad, he said.

"This can be done within a year or even sooner, provided that we properly complete the necessary legal procedures in our country."

"After that, we need to send the request abroad through the appropriate channels. This is done through mutual legal assistance."

"We are currently engaged in this process and are in the stage of sending requests. If we receive cooperation from foreign authorities, we will be able to freeze the assets. Once the assets are frozen, formal legal proceedings will begin in court, which typically take four to five years to reach a resolution," he added.

Speaking about those accused of embezzling and laundering money, Mansur said, "I don't believe they are at peace. They are hiring top lawyers. We've heard that S Alam [Mohammed Saiful Alam] will spend \$3 million a year on his legal team. That is not a sign of being at peace."

About the current turmoil involving mobile financial service provider Nagad, Mansur said Nagad's administrative team was unable to function due to the court's decision.

"We have appealed, and we hope to get justice. In the meantime, Nagad could take various actions, such as destroying documents or erasing evidence. However, to ensure that customers' money is not harmed, instructions have been given to the banks. Nagad will not be allowed to transfer any funds through the banks."

A journalist asked why the interim government had not yet taken any legal action against former central bank governors and deputy governors, who were allegedly involved in scams and loan irregularities.

Mansur said the Anti-Corruption Commission, after investigation, can take legal action if it believes that charges can be brought against them.

AFM Shahinul Islam, head of the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit, was also present at the briefing.

Protesters step up

FROM PAGE 1

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday at a programme in Sylhet warned that the ongoing protests in Dhaka may escalate if Ishraque was not allowed to take the oath of office soon.

He said, "People have locked down Nagar Bhaban for days and issued an ultimatum to the local government adviser. The court declared Ishraque the elected mayor, and the Election Commission issued a gazette in his name, yet he is not being sworn in, and excuses are being made. Is this the rule of law?"

The BNP leader accused the chief adviser and the adviser of local government of ignoring court orders and constitutional responsibilities. "If you disregard the court ruling and the Election Commission gazette, are you not directly opposing democracy?"

He urged the authorities concerned to immediately arrange the swearing in of Ishraque as DSCC mayor. "Otherwise, the protest in Dhaka may expand into a larger movement," he warned.

Earlier, LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain on Facebook alleged that the BNP was attempting to shut down Nagar Bhaban to install Ishraque as DSCC mayor. He said Ishraque's swearing in was not feasible due to 10 unresolved legal and procedural complications.

He criticised the protest as an undemocratic attempt to achieve political goals by disrupting public services and causing difficulties for citizens.

Ishraque on Facebook said the mayoral post is not the issue. The protest aims to expose the hidden lust for power among some members of the government.

He alleged that attempts to block the BNP's mayoral candidate revealed the government's real intentions regarding national elections. "No further discussion is acceptable. Those who have abandoned neutrality and acted as representatives of a particular party must resign immediately," Ishraque said.

THE PROTEST

Protesters yesterday again padlocked the main gate of Nagar Bhaban, causing the suspension of all operations, including critical services such as waste management, mosquito control, trade licencing, and the issuance of birth and death certificates.

The prolonged demonstrations have paralysed not only DSCC operations but also disrupted the activities of the LGRD ministry, which shares the Nagar Bhaban premises.

Ministry officials said Adviser Asif Mahmud had been relocated to the National Sports Council building, while Secretary Rezaul Maksud Jahedi has temporarily moved his office to the Secretariat.

Supporters of Ishraque also announced that the sit-in would continue from 10:00am to 5:00pm today, said Moshir Rahman, who leads the demonstrations.

SUFFERINGS

On average, Nagar Bhaban serves between 5,000 and 7,000 citizens a day.

A DSCC official said Zone-1 and Zone-4 of Nagar Bhaban had become non-operational.

A senior official of the DSCC's revenue department confirmed that all revenue-related activities, even at regional offices, are suspended.

"We cannot issue or renew trade licences or process certificates due to the blockade," the official said.

Rafiqul Islam, a resident of Narinda, came to register the births of his twins but had to leave without getting the job done.

"I need their birth certificates to apply for passports as we are planning to go abroad, but I can't proceed now," he told The Daily Star.

The disruption has raised concerns among DSCC engineers and health officials.

"Supervision and paperwork for ongoing projects like road repairs and drainage maintenance are completely halted..." a DSCC engineer said.

Contractors are also facing delays in payments, affecting thousands of labourers and suppliers just weeks before Eid, according to a source in the revenue department.

The DSCC's health department expressed alarm over the suspension of mosquito repellent distribution, warning of a potential dengue outbreak.

Many crucial tasks ahead of Eid have also stopped. These include finalising the tender process for temporary cattle markets, managing waste disposal, and preparing Eidgahs.

An official said, "We usually deploy extra manpower, hire additional vehicles, and coordinate with multiple agencies for Eid waste management, all of which require official letters and logistical planning. But everything is now stalled."

Even preparations for the national Eid congregation at the National Eidgah have come to a halt.

DSCC Administrator Md Shahjahan Mia said, "Garbage trucks can't operate because we can't issue fuel slips. Mosquito repellents are locked in storage."

[Our Sylhet correspondent contributed to this report.]

Betting on a leaner budget

FROM PAGE 1

foreign and local sources, but we'll bring the amount down," Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star on Sunday.

A key objective is to reduce the country's debt risk from "moderate" to "lower", Ahmed said, adding, "We'll try our best to reduce the budget deficit significantly."

While cutting administrative expenses is difficult, the government plans to curb expenditure by dropping large, capital-intensive infrastructure projects. Ahmed said the government would avoid costly ventures like Payra Port, which requires Tk 200 crore in annual dredging with limited returns. However, select investments such as the Bay Terminal and the metro rail, each costing around \$700-800 million, will move forward.

The government aims to place greater emphasis on labour-intensive development activities, such as roadwork and river excavation, to stimulate the rural economy. "We're looking at projects where local labour will be involved and the money will circulate at the local level. That's how we'll generate employment," said Ahmed, referring to his discussion with Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.

"We want employment to happen in agriculture and smaller projects, so the pressure on the budget will be less," he said.

In parallel, Bangladesh Bank is placing special focus on providing targeted loan schemes to support women's participation in the economy.

The forthcoming budget will also take a "business-friendly" approach, according to Ahmed. "We'll try to encourage the private sector. We also want to graduate to a phase that increases competitiveness."

Revenue mobilisation will be strengthened through a sweeping review of tax exemptions. "There are



The budget will also address broader social and developmental goals. "We'll increase spending in education, health, and social safety nets," said Ahmed. "We're putting an emphasis on self-employment. Not everyone will just look for jobs - those who are motivated should be able to create their own livelihoods."

This year's fiscal plan will also make a symbolic shift by recognising the role of domestic workers. "We'll mention domestic workers in the budget. They are part of the productive force. Their contribution hasn't been counted so far, but if we monetise it, it will be quite significant," Ahmed said, adding that formal GDP inclusion might happen in future.

Inflation, while still elevated, is expected to ease in the coming months. "Inflation is now decreasing,

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SHAMMO MURDER

Call for justice gets louder

DU students demand fair probe, resignation of VC, proctor

DU CORRESPONDENT

Amid ongoing protests over the murder of Dhaka University student and JCD leader Shahrar Alam Shammo, the platform "Students Against Terrorism" has once again demanded the resignation of the university's vice-chancellor and proctor, citing their failure to ensure campus security.

The students brought out a torch procession yesterday and marched through the campus, demanding justice for Shammo.

Earlier at a press conference in front of the Central Library, they placed a four-point demand, including immediate justice for Shammo through a proper investigation, and a formal apology from the administration for what it termed "administrative failure" that led to death of two students within nine months since August 5 last year.

The platform formed following Shammo's murder, comprises activists from Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and major left-leaning student organisations, including Bangladesh Chhatra Union, SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



Students of Dhaka University bring out a torch procession on the campus yesterday evening, demanding justice for DU student and JCD leader Shahrar Alam Shammo, who was stabbed to death near Suhrawardy Udyan on May 13. PHOTO: STAR

2 more cases filed against Hasina

STAR REPORT

Ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, alongside 61 Awami League leaders and activists, has been sued over the death of Sajal Mia, 20, a shoe factory worker, during student protests in the Shimrail area of Narayanganj on July 20 last year.

The accused include former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor Selina Hayat Ivy, former lawmakers Shamim Osman and Nazrul Islam Babu, as well as Shamim's son Imtihan Osman Ayan and nephew Azmeri Osman.

The case was filed by the victim's mother, Runa Begum, at Siddhirganj Police Station in Narayanganj on Friday night, said Officer-in-Charge Shahinur Alam. SEE PAGE 9 COL 8

Over 700 bridges, culverts 'highly risky'

Shows RHD survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 700 bridges and culverts under the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) have been found to be highly risky and in need of urgent repairs, according to an RHD survey.

The actual number may be higher, as inspections are yet to be completed in four out of 10 RHD zones. The findings were revealed at a discussion titled "Bangladesh Bridges: A Roadmap for Safety, Sustainability and Hazard Mitigation", held yesterday.

The event was organised under the SASEC Road Connectivity Project 2 in collaboration with the Buet-Japan Institute of Disaster Prevention and Urban Safety at Buet's Council Bhaban.

In a presentation, Shishir Kanti Routh, additional chief engineer (bridge management wing) of RHD, said there are 21,492 structures –



AT A GLANCE

Total 21,492 bridges, culverts under RHD; 15,437 inspected so far

Inspections still incomplete in 4 out of 10 zones

Years of overloading, climate impacts, low maintenance budget blamed

No structured bridge inspection existed before 2021

Country lacks national bridge code; work underway to develop one

7,741 bridges and 13,751 culverts – under the RHD network.

RHD began its first periodic inspection of these structures in December 2021. So far, 15,437 structures – 3,113 bridges and 12,324 culverts – across six zones have been inspected.

Inspections in Rangpur and Cumilla zones were completed between 2021 and 2022, while Chattogram, Sylhet, Khulna, and Barishal zones were covered later.

Of the inspected structures, 13,406 (86.8%) were rated A category (in good condition), 1,277 (8.3%) B category (minor issues), 42 (0.3%) C category (some risk), and 712 (4.6%) D category (highly risky and in need of immediate repair).

When this correspondent asked Shishir Kanti about the reason behind the large number of D-category bridges, he explained that until 2021, SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

Will focus on resolving disagreements in 2nd phase

Says Ali Riaz; first round of consensus talks ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Ali Riaz, vice-president of the National Consensus Commission, yesterday said the second phase of discussions will begin soon, focusing on resolving disagreements and advancing with the process of drafting a National Charter.

He made the remarks during a meeting with the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) at the National Parliament building.

With this meeting, the commission has completed its initial round of talks with political parties to build consensus on reforms.

Riaz said, "The first phase, which began two SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



COURT CORNER

Freeze BO accounts of ex-Rajuk chief
Court directs ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to freeze 13 Beneficiary Owner (BO) accounts and shares of former Rajuk chairman major general (ret'd) Md Siddiqur Rahman Sarker and his wife Gazi Rebeka Rawshan in connection with corruption allegations brought against them.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Director Md Abul Hasnat, who is leading the inquiry team, submitted an application in this regard.

In the application, the ACC official said the couple amassed huge amount of wealth in his name and the names of his family members through illegal means and corruption.

Form expert panel to tackle lightning deaths: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the government to form an expert committee with the persons having necessary technical knowledge to prevent loss of lives from lightning strikes and to submit a progress report on this issue before it in six months.

The court also issued a rule asking the government to explain why they should not be directed to take necessary steps to prevent loss of lives in lightning strikes.

The bench of Justice Fatema Najib and Justice Sikder Mahmudur Razi issued the order and rule following a petition filed by rights organisation Law and Life Foundation Trust and a Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Mohammed Kawser on May 13.

Travel ban on ex-additional IGP

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued a travel ban on former additional inspector general of police Mohammad Ali Mia in connection with corruption allegations.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Assistant Director Md Sajid-ur-Roman, who is leading the inquiry team, submitted an application in this regard.

In the application, the ACC official said Mohammad Ali Mia, also former chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, amassed a huge amount of wealth in his name and the names of his family members through illegal means and corruption.

No one has multiple NIDs anymore: DG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission identified 586 citizens with two National Identity cards and resolved the issue by cancelling their second NIDs recently, said its NID Wing Director General ASM Humayun Kabir yesterday.

DG Humayun shared this information while briefing the reporters at the EC building in the capital's Agargaon.

He said, "Since they had two NIDs, those were locked, and so they could not access citizen services in any way. The first NID has been retained and the second one discarded; now their first NID cards have been unlocked. They will now be able to access citizen services."

"At this moment, to our knowledge, no one has two NIDs anymore. If any new cases are identified, we will take the same action according to this policy," he added. SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

VCS, PRO-VCS AT PUBLIC UNIVS
Search committee formed after posts already filled

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The government has decided to form a search committee to recommend vice chancellors, pro-VCs, and treasurers for public universities. But educationists are criticising the timing and intent of the move as most of these top positions in at least 47 universities have already been filled.

However, some experts have welcomed the move as "better late than never".

The education ministry's secondary and higher education division issued a notification on Sunday, stating that the committee will review applications and propose three names for each post. The president, who also serves as the chancellor of public universities, will make the final appointments.

The committee, headed by Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar, includes University Grants Commission (UGC) members Prof Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan and Prof Md Saidur Rahman, Rajshahi University VC Prof Saleh Hasan Naqib, and BRAC University Prof Firdous Azim.

The University Wing of the education ministry's division will serve as its secretariat.

Former Jahangirnagar University Professor Anu Muhammad said forming a committee alone does not guarantee fair appointments or improved university governance.

"It depends entirely on who is appointed and SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



Makeshift fruit stalls have been set up over this rail crossing in the Uttara area of the capital. A train could arrive at any moment, leading to a disaster. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Trump claims breakthrough

Says Ukraine talks to start immediately

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump yesterday said that Russia and Ukraine "will immediately start negotiations" toward a ceasefire and an end to their three-year-old war, speaking after he held a call with Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

"Negotiations between Russia and Ukraine will begin immediately," Trump said in a Truth Social post following his call with Putin, which lasted two hours.

After the call, Putin said efforts to end the war were "generally on the right track" and that Moscow was ready to work with Ukraine on a potential peace deal.

"We have agreed with the president of the United States that Russia will propose and is ready to work with the Ukrainian side on a memorandum on a possible future peace accord," Putin told reporters near the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

There was no immediate comment from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. A source familiar with the matter earlier said Zelensky spoke "for a few minutes" with Trump before the US leader's call with Putin.

In his social media post, Trump said the Vatican, "as represented by the Pope, has stated that it would be very interested in hosting the negotiations. Let the process begin!"

Israel will take all of Gaza: PM

Strikes kill 52 more; WHO chief says 2m Gazans 'starving'

AFP, Gaza City

Israel yesterday said it will "take control" of the whole of Gaza, where aid entered for the first time in more than two months as rescuers reported dozens killed in a newly intensified offensive.

With the Gaza Strip under a total Israeli blockade since March 2, the World Health Organization said the besieged territory's "two million people are starving".

Israel, facing mounting criticism over the humanitarian crisis, has announced it would let limited aid into Gaza and said the first five trucks entered Monday, carrying supplies "including food for babies".

UN humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher said in a statement that nine trucks had been "cleared to enter... but it is a drop in the ocean of what is urgently needed."

UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric, who was unable to confirm the exact number of trucks inside Gaza, said that "none of the aid has been picked up" at a designated zone as it was "already dark" and due to "security concerns, we cannot operate in those conditions".

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu cited "practical and diplomatic reasons" for the resumption of aid, saying that "images of mass starvation" could harm the legitimacy of Israel's war effort.

In southern Gaza, the Israeli military issued an evacuation call to Palestinians in and around Khan Yunis city ahead of what it described as an "unprecedented attack".

The call came after the military announced it had begun "extensive ground operations" in an expanded offensive against Hamas.

Gaza's civil defence agency said 52 people had been killed in Israeli attacks across the territory.



A wounded girl receives treatment at Al-Awda Hospital at the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, following an Israeli airstrike that hit a school in the camp yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Netanyahu, in a video posted on Telegram, said that "the fighting is intense and we are making progress."

"We will take control of all the territory of the strip," the Israeli leader added.

The UN's OHCHR rights office decried actions that are "in defiance of international law and tantamount to ethnic cleansing", citing the latest attacks, displacement, the "methodical destruction of entire neighbourhoods" and denial of humanitarian aid.

Netanyahu yesterday said that Israel "will not give up. But in order to succeed, we must act in a way that cannot be stopped", justifying to his headline supporters the decision to resume aid.

Israel said its blockade was aimed at forcing concessions from Hamas, while UN agencies have warned of critical shortages of food, clean

water, fuel and medicines.

Meanwhile, twenty-two countries, including Australia, Britain, France, Germany, Japan and New Zealand yesterday demanded that Israel immediately "allow a full resumption of aid into Gaza" after the partial lifting of its blockade on the territory.

The joint statement was released as the United Nations said nine aid trucks were authorised to enter Gaza, describing it as a "drop in the ocean" amid the territory's humanitarian crisis.

The donors' statement also sharply rejected a reported Israeli plan to replace the previous system of aid distribution in Gaza, which Israeli officials have accused of having ties to Hamas.

The statement demanded that Israel "enable the UN and humanitarian organisations to work independently and impartially to save lives".

Inter-ministerial meet today

FROM PAGE 12

Energypac Fashions Ltd has three containers of garments items - shipped two days ago - now stuck at Benapole. The combined value of the goods in the three containers is over \$300,000, he said.

Rashid, who has been exporting to India for over seven years, said nearly 10 percent of his factory's products are meant for the Indian market. He now fears further disruptions to shipments bound for Nepal via Indian land ports and hopes for an amicable solution.

Kabir Ahmed, president of the Bangladesh Freight Forwarders Association, said exports to India would initially face disruption due to the restrictions, but trade flows would eventually shift to air and sea routes.

However, he warned that transport costs could rise by at least 20 percent due to the rerouting of shipments, and that trade through informal channels would inevitably decline.

"It is difficult, but we can overcome these challenges," he said.

In Jashore, exports through Benapole land port have also come to a halt following the restrictions. The land port is one of the country's largest and is dedicated entirely to exports.

"Normally, around 200-300 goods laden trucks would cross the border daily," said Mamun Taralder, deputy director of the port. "But only 151 trucks passed through the port on Monday [till 5:30pm]."

He added that the 36 trucks stranded at the port till yesterday had to leave the premises after failing to cross the border.

During a visit to the port yesterday, trading activities were seen subdued. Customs stations, clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents, and transport workers had little to do, while many traders expressed concerns over the future of their businesses.

"If this situation continues, our entire export chain will collapse," warned Emdadul Haque Lota, general secretary of the C&F Agents Association.

Shakil makes History

FROM PAGE 1

has reached the summit and is safe. He has descended to Camp 4. Due to limited network access, more details will be shared later," Shakil's local coordinators posted on his official Facebook page.

If confirmed by Guinness World Records, Shakil will be the fastest and youngest person to complete the herculean task.

Later, the local coordinators, quoting 8K Expeditions, said Shakil climbed down to camp 2.

Sherpa guide Tashi Galjen, who is attempting a record: four Everest summits in a single season, accompanied Shakil to the top and is now descending with him.

Shakil began his expedition from the shores of Inani Beach in Cox's Bazar on February 25 to raise awareness about climate change, particularly against plastic pollution.

After walking 1,374 kilometres over 64 days, crossing bustling cities, winding mountain paths, and even swimming 3km across the mighty Jamuna river, he reached Everest Base Camp on April 29.

Along the way, Shakil engaged with local communities and spread awareness about plastic pollution and climate change - an adventure he regularly shared on his social media handles.

He reached Dhaka in 12 days. After a brief rest, he resumed his trek and reached Banglabandha Land Port in Panchagarh on March 28, walking around 970km.

From there, he crossed into India, trekking through Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling before entering Nepal on March 31 through Kakarvitta Land Port.

According to his companions along the way and his official Facebook page, he then trekked to Kanchenjunga Base Camp for acclimatisation.

After trekking more than 385km through Nepal, he finally reached Everest Base Camp on April 29.

A crucial phase of

acclimatisation followed, including climbs to Camp 3 and back, part of the high-altitude preparation before the final summit push.

On May 16, Shakil left the base camp for Camp 2, then climbed successively to Camp 3 (May 17), Camp 4 (May 18), and finally made his summit bid on May 19.

Inspired by Australian mountaineer Tim Macartney-Snape, who first completed this expedition in 1990, walking 1,126 km in 96 days before summiting Everest, Shakil devised his own adventure.

Though he was physically and mentally prepared, securing the funds for such an ambitious journey proved to be a major challenge.

"Taking on such a task was not easy," said Sadia Sultana, one of his local coordinators. "Shakil was determined, but financial uncertainty constantly loomed over the expedition," she added.

Despite the odds, the climb was made possible through a combination of corporate sponsorships, generous crowdfunding, and donations from travel enthusiasts across the country.

Key support came from PRAN group, the UNDP, Mr Noodles, Makalu E-Traders Nepal, and Systema Bangladesh.

Shakil's summit marks a historic milestone for Bangladesh mountaineering. He became the seventh Bangladeshi to summit Everest, following the footsteps of Musa Ibrahim, MA Muhiit, Nishat Majumder, Wasfia Nazreen, Mohammad Khaled Hossain and Babar Ali.

Shakil is a seasoned adventurer and environmental advocate. A graduate of India's Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, he has successfully climbed Himalayan peaks such as Kyajo Ri, Draupadi Ka Danda II, Himlung, and Dolma Khang.

In 2023, he gained attention for completing the Great Himalaya Trail, a gruelling 1,700-kilometer trek across Nepal's mountain spine from east to west.

Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute
Savar, Dhaka-1341.

Memo No: 33.05.2672.000.207.05.0001.17-202 Date: 19.05.2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender will be invited through the National e-GP System (<http://www.eprocurement.gov.bd>) for procurement of following goods details are given below:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of goods	Tender Document Last Selling/Downloading Date & Time	Tender Closing / Opening Date & Time
1115012	GR -24	Procurement of e-books.	02-Jun-2025 12:00	02-Jun-2025 13:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted through the National e-GP system.

To get access to the e-Tender document, the required fees is to be deposited through any registered Scheduled bank before 02-Jun-2025 12:00 for the Procurement of e-books. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System.

Size: (5"x 3/C)

(Signature)
29/05/2025
(Dr. Shakila Faruque)
Director General (T.C)
Phone: 02224491676

GD-1213

UN team planning

FROM PAGE 1

A statement by the New York-based Human Rights Watch in March 2022 said the Bangladesh government has a "habit" of ignoring the UN's concerns over its human rights record. It had said that the government had not responded to repeated requests by the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to visit Bangladesh.

The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances Chairperson Justice Moinul Islam Chowdhury, in March this year, said the commission has received 1,752 complaints regarding enforced disappearances and has investigated 1,000 of them.

According to the commission's records, there are 330 cases of enforced disappearances involving individuals who have not returned.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Public Administration
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka
www.mopa.gov.bd

No: 05.00.0000.113.07.009.2025-451 Date: 19-05-2025

e-Tender Notice No. 5/2024-25

Ministry of Public Administration of Bangladesh invites the Flowing tender in the National e-GP Portal:

Sl	Tender Id	Name of Supply	Publishing Date and Time	Closing Date and Time
1	1110431	Telephone Equipment	20 May 2025 & 10.00	03 June 2025 & 14.00
2	1110441	Brand New Digital Photocopier Machine		
3	1114718	Cleaning Products/Goods		

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-Gp portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal should be deposited on-line through any registered Bank.

Further Information and Guidelines are Available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Signature)
19.05.25
Md. Abu Aowal
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Public Administration
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
Phone: 55100540

GD-1204

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
Ministry of Public Administration
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000
www.mopa.gov.bd

No: 05.00.0000.113.23.041.2024- 444 Date: 19-05-2024

Invitation for Tender

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Public Administration															
2	Agency	N/A															
3	Procuring Entity Name	Ministry of Public Administration															
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka															
5	Invitation for	Goods & related Services															
6	Invitation Ref No	05.00.0000.113.23.041.2024- 443															
7	Date	19 May 2025															
KEY INFORMATION																	
8	Procurement Method	OTM (Framework)															
FUNDING INFORMATION																	
9	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue/GOB															
PARTICULAR INFORMATION																	
10	Tender Package No.	6(2024-25)															
11	Tender Package Name	Procurement of Books, Printing &Packaging															
12	Tender Publication Date	20-05-2025															
13	Tender Last Selling Date and Time	01-06-2025; 04:00 pm															
14	Tender Closing Date and Time	03-06-2024; 02:00 pm															
15	Tender Opening Date and Time	03-06-2025; 03:00 pm															
16	Name & Address of the office(s)	Address															
	Selling Tender Document	Joint Secretary, Administration Section-4, Room#114, Building#3, Ministry of Public Administration, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000.															
	Receiving Tender Document	Joint Secretary, Administration Section-4, Room#114, Building#3, Ministry of Public Administration, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000.															
	Opening Tender Document	Joint Secretary, Admin Branch, Ministry of Public Administration, Room#111, Building#3, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000.															
17	Place / Date / Time of Pre-Tender Meeting (Optional)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Time</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>21 May 2025</td> <td>10.00 am - 11.00 am</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Time	21 May 2025	10.00 am - 11.00 am											
Date	Time																
21 May 2025	10.00 am - 11.00 am																
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER																	
18	Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	The tenderer should be well experienced with (1) Valid Trade License of 2024-25; (2) Income Tax Certificate of 2023-24 (3) Bank Solvency Certificate Collected on or after 319 May 2025; (4) VAT Registration Certificate (5) Bank Statement (22 July 2024- 21 May 2025); (6) Undertaking of not being blacklisted or debarred by any government/autonomous body; (7) Other qualifications as stated in the STD.															
19	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Lot-1: Books Lot-2: Printing &Packaging															
20	Brief Description of Related Services	Not Applicable															
21	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	Lot-1/ Lot -2: Tk.1000.00 (each)															
22	Lot Identification of Lot	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Lot</th> <th>Identification of Lot</th> <th>Location</th> <th>Tender Security Amount (Tk)</th> <th>Completion Time in Weeks</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Books</td> <td>Ministry of Public Administration</td> <td>21,000.00</td> <td>02 (Two)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Printing &Packaging</td> <td>Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.</td> <td>20,000.00</td> <td>02 (Two)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Lot	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Completion Time in Weeks	1	Books	Ministry of Public Administration	21,000.00	02 (Two)	2	Printing &Packaging	Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	20,000.00	02 (Two)
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1	Books	Ministry of Public Administration	21,000.00	02 (Two)													
2	Printing &Packaging	Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	20,000.00	02 (Two)													
23	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Abu Aowal															
24	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Joint Secretary															
25	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Administration Section -4, Room#114, Building #3, Ministry of Public Administration, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000															
26	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	02-55100540 Fax: 02-55101056 admins@mopa.gov.bd															
27	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all or any of the tenders.																

(Signature)
19.05.25
Md. Abu Aowal
Joint Secretary
Phone: 55100540

GD-1205

Stop teen gang menace in Manikganj

Recent surge in violent teen activities raises alarm

We are alarmed at the growing menace of teen gang violence in different parts of the country, especially in Manikganj where things have been particularly disturbing. According to some recent reports, clashes between teen gangs have become quite common in the district city and nearby regions. Just over the past month, there have been at least five violent incidents in the town, as per locals. For instance, about 30-40 members of teen gangs, armed with machetes and Chinese axes, ran amok on the streets last Tuesday, following what appeared to be an internal feud among the groups. Several students were injured. While police have made a number of arrests and filed cases in connection with these incidents, their lack of effect suggests that the root of the problem lies deeper—and reactive law enforcement alone cannot solve it.

These teenagers often come from lower- or middle-income families; some are school dropouts, while others are still enrolled but heavily disengaged from academic activities. Often, members of the gangs are seen roaming the streets, creating panic through open displays of weapons, engaging in turf wars, and harassing female students. Their involvement in drugs, "senior-junior" rivalries, and romantic disputes has also been reported. The teen gang culture is usually attributed to children's exposure to political exploitation during Awami League's 15-year rule, when Chhatra League formed its units even at the school level, drawing teenagers into street politics and creating a breeding ground for gang activities. Other political groups also provided patronage. That said, we must also acknowledge the influence of persistent social tensions and lack of parental supervision, which combined to create a climate where young minds easily find validation in violence.

While the Awami League's fall on August 5 brought a temporary lull in the teen gang culture, it has surged again in recent months, with violent activities reported in Dhaka's Mohammadpur, Cumilla, and Chandpur early this week. This suggests that successive political actors have been either reluctant to confront this issue or interested in exploiting it, as teen gangs—with their potential for street-level muscle—can be used to extend influence on the ground. And this situation, we fear, may worsen with the approach of the next elections.

But given its long-term effect on the future of the nation, it is vital that we address the teen gang culture with the seriousness it deserves. There is an evident need for awareness, especially of parents, as well as community support, safe recreational spaces, and quality education for our young men so that they can direct their energy to constructive things. Political parties also must stop providing patronage to teenagers for their own gain. We all must understand that we risk losing an entire generation to violence if we fail to act now.

Procurement rules must be fair

Grievances of local manufacturers are justified

A recent roundtable discussion on the public procurement process in Bangladesh has again brought to light issues that have long been raised but sadly remain unresolved. The event, attended by local industrialists, procurement experts, and government officials, highlighted how the existing procurement framework sidelines local manufacturers in favour of foreign experts and companies, limiting their ability to compete for government contracts. Some participants called the procurement rules "discriminatory," as they allegedly lock out well-established local companies from a government spending pool worth \$30 billion.

They also pointed out that the existing rules neither ensure full transparency nor guarantee fair competition. There were instances where domestic bidders were reportedly rejected for invalid reasons. This lack of competitiveness has been an issue for long, with a recent Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) study revealing that over the last 12 years, more than 62 percent of tenders went to just five percent of contractors. The introduction of the electronic government procurement (e-GP) system—which was intended to address such irregularities and promote fair bidding—has failed to make a difference. In 2023, TIB found that public contracts worth Tk 60,069 crore were awarded based on single bids through the e-GP system. How is that possible if the system isn't being manipulated? The role of Bangladesh Competition Commission in addressing such malpractice has been questionable, to say the least.

Over the years, Bangladesh's manufacturing base has grown significantly in several sectors. We now have multibillion-dollar industries that have successfully expanded operations in multiple countries. This should give them ample expertise to participate in domestic projects—provided the process is transparent, competitive, and merit-based. The engagement of local companies also helps boost domestic expertise and revenue. In the process, local manufacturing can receive a strong push, creating jobs, saving valuable foreign currency currently spent on hiring foreign firms, and making meaningful contributions to the national economy.

Unfortunately, corruption in public projects remains a grave concern that needs urgent intervention. According to TIB, around 27 percent of government contracts involve corruption. Overinflated cost estimates regularly make headlines. For instance, in 2023, the state-run Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd (PGCBL) reportedly imported 68 kg of tower bolts, nuts, and washers from India for \$239,695, when the actual price should have been a mere \$148! Examples like this are far too common.

Clearly, the public procurement system is in urgent need of an overhaul. We hope the interim government will take necessary steps to introduce long-overdue reforms to make public procurement fair, transparent, efficient, and corruption-free.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Cuba gains independence

On this day in 1902, Cuba gained its independence from the United States, which had taken control of the island in 1899 after defeating Spain in the Spanish-American War.

Why job creation must come first

MIND THE GAP

Barrister Noshin Nawal is an activist, feminist, and a columnist for The Daily Star. She can be reached at nawalnoshin@gmail.com.



NOSHIN NAWAL

In Bangladesh, the economy grows, flyovers rise, export numbers impress, and yet the average citizen stares blankly at their plate, wondering how to make groceries last the week. It is the great national contradiction: GDP goes up but job security goes down. Economic success stories echo in the halls of power, but the garment workers in the narrow alleys of Mohammadpur, the fresh graduates in Natore, and the rickshaw pullers in Cumilla are all asking the same thing: where are the sustainable jobs?

The truth is, we have perfected the art of looking developed without actually becoming it. Our problems aren't hard to diagnose. Nearly 20 lakh young people enter the labour force every year, yet formal job creation trails far behind. According to the latest quarterly labour force survey by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the unemployment rate has reached 4.63 percent, the highest in recent years. Besides, informal employment makes up over 80 percent of the labour market. Automation, climate migration, lack of upskilling, gender exclusion, and concentration of opportunities in urban areas have made this labour market not just tight, but unjust.

What makes this particularly painful is that Bangladesh is not short of talent, ambition, or work ethic. What it lacks is a system that knows how to convert that into meaningful employment. Instead, we hand out certificates without purpose and diplomas without direction. Across slums and suburbs, young people with degrees are waiting to be useful, watching their potential rot under the pressure of parental expectations, rising food prices, and the suffocating stasis of doing nothing in a country that always claims it's doing everything.

So, let's talk about the real story: jobs—not one-off projects, not Facebook training workshops, not the kind of "entrepreneurship" where the youth are told to sell pickles online for "self-reliance," but actual, living-wage, future-ready jobs. We need a serious national strategy, not sloganeering. And that starts with understanding



ILLUSTRATION: BIPOB CHAKROBORTY

who needs jobs and what's stopping them.

For those in the working class—garment workers, domestic workers, small traders—the hurdle is not just low wages, but zero protection. There is no social safety net if they fall ill, no pension, no legal recourse if they're cheated. These are the hands that run our economy, but they are treated as disposable. Legal reform, minimum wage guarantees, and union protections are not luxuries; they are the foundation of justice in a labour market.

For educated youth, the problem is even more sinister. Years of public money are spent educating them, only for the state to shrug when they graduate. What should they do? Join a political rally in exchange for lunch money? Compete for a public sector job where the recruitment board changes rules mid-exam? Or dream of Dubai while they tutor O Level students to pay their loan instalments?

Meanwhile, rural youth are either

all need is a government that listens, and not just before elections.

Recently, Tarique Rahman, acting chairperson of BNP, released a 31-point reform plan that, for all its politics, at least puts jobs where they belong: at the centre. Unemployment allowances for educated youth? About time. Investment in decentralised agro-industries? Necessary. Rebuilding institutions to ensure merit-based recruitment? Revolutionary, if done sincerely. But what's more important than individual party promises is this: whoever comes to power next must stop treating employment like an afterthought to economic growth. It is the centrepiece that will stabilise the country, combat rising crime rates, and curtail the chaos.

The new government must begin with a national employment guarantee framework, particularly in rural and climate-affected zones. It must invest in large-scale public works that not only create jobs but solve real problems: canals, climate-resilient housing, and rural

Rajshahi, and for the slum child who just wants to go to school so they can someday work with dignity. These aren't demands, they are rights. All the reform commissions and their timelines might be resultantly futile if, in the next five years, Bangladesh cannot address the issue of sustainable livelihood.

Without jobs, no amount of infrastructure will save us. What's the point of a six-lane highway if the only traffic it carries is outbound flights of our brightest minds? What use is a smart city when its residents are too broke to afford broadband internet? A state that cannot provide work is not a prospering state. It is a waiting room for disillusionment.

And when disillusionment reaches its limit, it doesn't stay quiet. So, before we build another monument, another megaproject, another symbol, let's do the one thing that truly builds a country: give its people a chance to work, earn, and live with dignity. Otherwise, it's all flyovers to nowhere.

Rickshaws, rights, and the rulebook

Maisha Islam Monamee is student at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) at the University of Dhaka and a contributor at The Daily Star. She can be reached at @monameereads on Instagram.



MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

Recently, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) launched a long-anticipated crackdown on rickshaws, especially battery-powered ones, operating on the capital's main roads. Within hours, around 30 vehicles were seized, and scenes of drivers breaking down in tears quickly circulated online. Some collapsed to the ground, devastated at the loss of their livelihoods. In a city that often confuses chaos with character, Dhaka's latest attempt to restore some semblance of road sanity has, predictably, met with backlash. The public conversation fractured into two polarised camps: one hailing the move as long overdue, the other condemning it as a classist assault on the livelihoods of the poor. But somewhere between these extremes lies the harder, more uncomfortable truth.

Battery-operated rickshaws, by law, are not allowed on major roads of DNCC. Not because someone woke up with a vendetta against three-wheelers, but because they became one of the leading contributors to road accidents. These vehicles lack basic safety measures and are driven without formal documents, frequently speeding and weaving dangerously

through traffic. Passengers riding them are not safe. Nor are pedestrians crossing the road. Anyone who has had to drive or walk in Dhaka during rush hour knows this. These rickshaws, while affordable and accessible, are often chaotic and erratic. They swerve

with. This is not just a governance failure but a betrayal of the poor in slow motion. It is a deeply flawed cycle, where informality fills the void left by inadequate policy, and the informal becomes so embedded that even lawful enforcement begins to look unjust. And, when enforcement agencies finally decided to act, after issuing repeated warnings, the narrative quickly turned to one of state cruelty.

So, is this crackdown selectively cruel? That question deserves to be taken seriously. Too often, policy disproportionately affects those who already live precariously; those who do not have the cushion to absorb

everyone around them?

I do not think it is cruel to want our roads to be safer. It is cruel, however, if we do not offer people a way to be part of that safety. This is not a case of overnight authoritarianism but one that is an inevitable outcome of decades of selective ignorance. Here, the state's failure to regulate, license, and formalise these vehicles for so long has bred a false sense of legitimacy. So, the failure is not on these drivers but on the system. And, while we begin enforcement, we must also reckon with responsibility. DNCC has already announced training programmes for rickshaw drivers scheduled to begin this month. Those who complete the training will be issued valid licenses. And rickshaws produced by approved manufacturers will be allowed in designated areas.

However, the promised training programmes must be real, accessible, and timely. We must ensure alternative employment pathways for those affected. The debate is not whether the poor deserve to earn a living. Of course they do. The concern, therefore, is what kind of system we are allowing them to earn in. Informality may offer quick entry points, but it also locks people out of long-term security. A driver with no license and no vehicle registration has no protection, no insurance, no labour rights, and no claim if something goes wrong. It is a freedom with no safety net. Is that the best we can offer? So no, an illegal rickshaw is not a civil right. It is a symptom of a broken system that we have finally started fixing. And one that was long overdue.

Battery-operated rickshaws, by law, are not allowed on major roads of DNCC. Not because someone woke up with a vendetta against three-wheelers, but because they became one of the leading contributors to road accidents. These vehicles lack basic safety measures and are driven without formal documents, frequently speeding and weaving dangerously through traffic.

unexpectedly, brake without warning, and in many cases, operate outside any system of accountability. None of this is breaking news. And, none of this has happened in the shadows. For several months, these vehicles have been tolerated in a kind of legal limbo and as a daily reminder of a state that often looks away rather than step in. Drivers, in turn, invested what little they had to enter a system that was never fully legal to begin

sudden shocks. In this case, the people caught in the dragnet are those who have been systematically left without alternatives. They were allowed to live in an illusion of legitimacy until the curtain was abruptly pulled back.

But at the same time, we must ask whether it is progressive to accept illegality simply because it is popular or accessible? Are we doing justice to these people by letting them operate in a system that endangers them and

TARIFFS AND TRADE WARS

Bangladesh's path in a new geo-economic order



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MUHAMMAD MOHIUDDIN

The trade war between the US and China has become a significant topic of discussion among policymakers and academics since Donald Trump took office in 2025. It started during Trump 1.0, continued under President Joe Biden, and further expanded under the Trump 2.0 era. Trade policy pundits argue that these policies have been criticised globally. However, analysis of American industrial history, economic prosperity, and the current state of international trade imbalances can broaden our perspective on the trade war and American policies.

Reindustrialisation, entrepreneurship, innovation, and creating opportunities for millions of individuals have become crucial for developed economies. The trade war of Trump 2.0 will likely remain active in the coming years and affect global value chains (GVCs). Economies across the globe might

optimisation of resources and strategies, and geo-economic and geopolitical realities.

China has shown resilience and successfully reconfigured its value chains since the trade war of Trump 1.0. However, not all economies have the free hand and resources to do so. China was the largest source of imports to the US until 2022, capturing 21 percent of the import share. Since then, China has reduced its exports to this market by diverting and increasing its exports to non-US and non-EU markets in the Global South. They have also invested heavily in developing their technological prowess under the "Made in China 2025" policy and the Belt and Road Initiative.

Bangladesh, not possessing all of China's capabilities, can learn from China's experience and reformulate international trade strategies for geographical and product diversification.

before the start of the trade war, Bangladesh's RMG industry faced serious challenges, such as low-cost and labour-intensive manufacturing, highly concentrated export markets, intermediate component and raw material sourcing, political uncertainty, graduation to a lower-middle-income country, and loss of advantages as a least developing economy.

Bangladesh should diversify its intermediate components and raw materials

area, might lead the US to reconsider the tariff issue, offer Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) facilities, and attract more American investment and technology transfers.

Bangladesh's economy and the current administration are facing challenges due to the US tariff imposition, though based on a flawed measurement. The current market dynamics and restructuring of the GVCs have led to a shift in the RMG sector from

business environment. Public policies should focus on improving the manufacturing ecosystem so that firms from other countries choose Bangladesh as their production hub to export to global markets. The competitiveness of RMG products depends not only on the cost of labour but also on the physical and soft infrastructure, both formal and informal institutions, and on stimulating public policies.

Improving infrastructures and institutions, including the smooth operation of seaports, shipping, customs administration, and banking services, can help RMG factories enhance their competitiveness. Bangladesh should diversify its export market to non-traditional markets, such as African, Middle Eastern, and South American markets, where there is a huge demand for low-cost, high-value RMG products. The interim government should discuss and negotiate with the two largest neighbouring markets, India and China, to remove non-tariff-related barriers (NTB) so Bangladeshi products can enter those markets without hassle.

Bangladesh faces the prospect of losing several advantages it enjoys as a least developed country. To address this, the government should renegotiate or ask for a delay in applying tariffs once it graduates to a lower-middle income country. For the medium and long term, Bangladesh must sign free trade agreements with leading export markets to make trade smoother. We must focus on upgrading the value ladder for our exportable products, diversifying product baskets, and ensuring technology transfer through international joint ventures and other equity investments.

People generally do not like "change" and prefer to maintain the "status quo," which leads to organisational inertia. Crisis and a chaotic environment bring opportunities to think freshly, introduce harsh reform, and rebuild organisations. The current global trade frictions can help create many opportunities for Bangladesh's manufacturing industry if proper reforms, investment in infrastructure and technology, and institutional policies are updated, and effectiveness is improved.



Bangladesh's RMG sector needs to come out of the low-cost, low-tech, and labour-intensive business models.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

sourcing instead of relying on only China and India. This could involve enhancing trade relations with Pakistan, Central Asian countries, Southeast Asian countries, and the US. Many Central American countries use American cotton to produce RMG products and export them to the US in a duty-free and quota-free mode. This strategy could lessen the trade deficit and encourage American policymakers to reconsider tariff levels for Bangladesh. Demonstrating a sincere effort in reducing trade deficits and strengthening partnerships in the geo-economic and geopolitical arena, including in the Indo-Pacific

low-cost, low-tech, and labour-intensive business models to high-tech and higher value-added products. To survive and prosper in this competitive business ecosystem, the government should play the role of promoter by developing specific initiatives and strategies that encourage, enable, and encourage the RMG sector to come out of the low-cost, low-tech, and labour-intensive business models.

Bangladesh can attract firms quitting the Chinese and Vietnamese markets by developing the skills and productivity of its employees, investing in advanced technologies, and creating a welcoming

Bangladesh should diversify its intermediate components and raw materials sourcing instead of relying on only China and India. This could involve enhancing trade relations with Pakistan, Central Asian countries, Southeast Asian countries, and the US. Many Central American countries use American cotton to produce RMG products and export them to the US in a duty-free and quota-free mode. This strategy could lessen the trade deficit and encourage American policymakers to reconsider tariff levels for Bangladesh.

reconfigure their participation in GVCs by re-orchestrating their downstream and upstream involvement depending on each economy's context. The global production networks need to consider economic efficiency, productivity,

Thanks to its participation in GVCs, Bangladesh has become the second-largest exporter of RMG. The imposition of tariffs has created panic among the RMG industry, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Even

REMEMBERING MUSTAFA ZAMAN ABBASI

A folk legend who bridged religion and culture



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SYED MUNIR KHASRU

The passing of Mustafa Zaman Abbasi marks the end of an era in Bangla folk music. More than a singer, scholar, or musicologist, he embodied the soul of a cultural tradition whose depth, nuance, and spirit found the most authentic expression in him. Now that he is gone, something irreplaceable has gone with him.

He was the youngest son of legendary folk singer Abbasuddin Ahmed. He spent his early years in Kolkata before moving to Dhaka, where he earned his BA and MA from the University of Dhaka. Raised in a family steeped in music and tradition, his path was shaped by both heritage and conviction.

Abbasi was second to none in Bangladesh's realm of folk music. In this age of fleeting fame and fast trends, his work was steady, deliberate and foundational. Through his performances and popular programmes like *Amar Thikana* and *Bhora Nadeer Banke* on Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television, he brought folk music into homes across the nation. He studied and collected Bhawaiya, Bhatiali, Murshidi, Chatka songs rooted in rivers, fields, and folklore. Over five decades, he not only performed but also preserved thousands of songs, giving them context and notation. His literary and musical contributions resulted in over 50 publications, including monumental works like *Bhatir Desher Bhatiali* and *History of Folk Music*. He curated folk anthologies, led music research groups, and served as president of UNESCO's Bangladesh National Committee of Music. Abbasi embodied cultural stewardship at its highest level.

His influence was not confined to music as he represented something more powerful i.e., the harmonious coexistence of faith and culture. Abbasi was a devout Muslim, deeply spiritual and grounded in religious thought. He wrote extensively on Islam, including books on the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and translated the Holy Quran by Sufi

scholar Sahl al-Tustari, and yet, he was never insular. He sang devotional pieces like "Madeenar dhuli aji dhannya", penned spiritual works such as "Rumir Oloukik Bagan" and "Muhammad er naam (The Name of Muhammad)", yet he was equally at ease writing contemporary literature like "Harinakhi" and "Shondhye Hoyni Ekhono". Abbasi's understanding of Islam was gentle. He believed, and often said, that Muslims should also love believers of other faiths.



Mustafa Zaman Abbasi (1937-2025)

He viewed culture not as a threat to religion, but as a way of expressing the divine, through melody, rhythm, and word. He stood as a rare example of a life where religion and culture were not at odds but in conversation. In Abbasi, faith and folklore, prayer, and poetry, came together seamlessly. He showed that one could be God-fearing and a practising Muslim without being immutable, culturally literate without being secularist, and that tradition need not be preserved in rigidity but in joyful celebration.

Abbasi's deep and resonant voice carried not only songs, but values.

It carried stories of rural Bengal, laments of lovers, invocations of river gods, and praises of Allah. It carried the past into the present and gave it relevance. Those who heard him sing will remember the sincerity in his tone, the reverence in his expression, and the precision behind every performance.

His contributions were widely recognised. The Ekushey Padak, Bangladesh's second highest civilian award, was among many accolades he received. Also included are Nazrul Academy Award, Shilpakala Academy Award, Lalou Parishad Award, and Abbasuddin Gold Medal. He was the director general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and participated in global cultural forums. Even in his later years, he remained intellectually active. He taught at Independent University, where he founded the Kazi Nazrul Islam and Abbasuddin

Ahmed Research and Study Centre. He engaged with his students as equals, discussing music, literature, and faith with the same warmth he shared with longtime friends. Abbasi served as district governor of Rotary Bangladesh, where both he and his late wife, Asma Abbasi, district chairperson of Inner Wheel Bangladesh, dedicated themselves to community service and social welfare. Asma Abbasi was a distinguished educator and author in her own right, she was Abbasi's partner in every sense. Together, they built a life that reflected not only deep religious values but also

cultural enlightenment. Asma Abbasi being the younger sister of my mother Najma Khasru, I witnessed the synergy of the Khala-Khalu or Abbasi-Asma partnership. They have been blessed with two bright, intelligent, and culturally talented daughters Samira Abbasi and Sharmini Abbasi.

At a time when religion and culture seem to be at odds, as people with extreme views on both sides

make it sound like it must be one or the other, Abbasi was a living example they are not mutually exclusive but rather complimentary. Late Mustafa Zaman Abbasi was one who lived by example whereby he would say prayers five times in the mosque, while not missing an opportunity to attend a cultural evening.

For those of us who knew Abbasi closely, his passing is more than just

a loss for the family but, above all, he was a kindhearted, graceful soul who lived through his beliefs, music, and words. He lived a life worth singing about. May the Almighty grant his soul eternal peace in the afterworld as he treats the gardens of heaven murmuring the hymns, songs, and poetry eloquently as he did in this world.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Brahmanbaria
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Memo No- 35.01.1213.406.14.259.25, 906 **Date- 18.05.25**

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Brahmanbaria for the procurement of :

S.L. No	Package No.	Tender ID	Name of the works	Downloaded & Last Selling Date & Time	Closing & Opening Date & Time
1.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/BABNSR and SNL/ WP-6/2024- 2025	1107138	Earth Work, Construction of Rigid Pavement, Flexible Pavement (Reconstruction, Widening & Strengthening), Surfacing, Drain (RCC U Drain & Brick Masonry U-Drain) and Protective work at 1st km to 6th km (Ch.0+000 m to Ch.6+000 m) of Sarail-Nasirmagar-Lakhai Road (R-220) under Road Division, Brahmanbaria during the year 2024-2025.	12/05/2025 11:30 to 18/06/2025 17:00	19/06/2025 12:30
2.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/BABNSR and SNL/ WP-07 /2024-2025	1107140	Earth Work, Flexible Pavement (Widening & Strengthening), Surfacing, RCC Box Culvert (1 Nos) and Protective work at 6th km to 12th km (Ch.6+000m to 12+000m) of SarailNasirmagar-Lakhai Road (R-220) under Road Division, Brahmanbaria during the year 2024- 2025.	12/05/2025 11:30 to 18/06/2025 17:00	19/06/2025 12:30
3.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/BABNSR and SNL/ WP-08 /2024-2025	1107141	Earth Work, Construction of Rigid Pavement, Flexible Pavement (Widening & Strengthening), Surfacing, RCC Box Culvert (2 Nos) and Protective work at 13th km to 18th km (Ch.12+000m to 18+000m) of Sarail-Nasirmagar-Lakhai Road (R-220) under Road Division, Brahmanbaria during the year 2024-2025.	12/05/2025 11:30 to 18/06/2025 17:00	19/06/2025 12:30
4.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/BABNSR and SNL/ WP-09 /2024-2025	1107145	Earth Work, Construction of Rigid Pavement, Flexible Pavement (Widening & Strengthening), Surfacing, Bridge (1 No) and Protective work at 19th km to 26th (p) km (Ch.18+000 m to 25+128m) of Sarail-Nasirmagar- Lakhai Road (R-220) under Road Division, Brahmanbaria during the year 2024-2025.	12/05/2025 11:30 to 18/06/2025 17:00	19/06/2025 12:30
5.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/BABNSR and SNL/ WP-02/2024-2025,	1110886	Earth Work, Construction of Flexible Pavement, RCC Box Culvert (06 Nos) & Bridge (2 Nos), Drain and Protective work from 27th (p) km (Ch.26+890 m) to 36th (p) (Ch. 35+350 m) km of Bhulta-Araihazar-Bancharampur- Nabinagar- Shibpur-Radhika R-203, (korikandi to Bancharampur - Nabinagar) under Road Division, Brahmanbaria during the year 2024-2025.	15/05/2025 21:00 to 29/05/2025 21:30	28/05/2025 21:30

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

(Mir Nizam Uddin Ahmed)
ID No. 602156
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Brahmanbaria

GD-1206

Over 48,400 arrested in one month

FROM PAGE 12

Flash processions by the banned Chhatra League and other AL-affiliated organisations were brought out in multiple districts, including Khulna, Kishoreganj, Jashore, Shariatpur, Narayanganj, Cumilla, and Barishal.

The DMP said the banned BCL and like-minded groups watch police movements and bring out brief processions. They would then upload photos and videos of the processions on social media. "Law enforcers were analysing photos and videos to identify the participants," according to the DMP.

On Sunday, 11 AL activists were held from a flash procession in the capital's Gulistan area. Yesterday, the Detective Branch picked up 16 more members of the banned BCL and AL

from various spots across Dhaka.

Mohammadpur police yesterday raided Rayerbazar area and arrested 44 people, including members of a local gang.

Among those detained are drug dealers, muggers, individuals with outstanding arrest warrants, and others involved in various criminal activities, police said.

The law enforcers stepped up their drives after Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury last month ordered them to prevent the AL from bringing out processions, warning that officers who would fail to stop such gatherings would face disciplinary action.

Meanwhile, a list obtained by this newspaper from the Rangpur Metropolitan Police, dated April 23, categories arrests

under various headers, including "instigators/planners/associates of destabilisation," as well as those involved in illegal arms possession, smuggling, robbery, and extortion.

Jannat Ul-Farhad, assistant inspector general of prisons (development), said the overall prison population has remained relatively stable, as new arrests are being balanced by inmates being released on bail.

Chattogram Jail Senior Jail Superintendent Iqbal Hossain, however, said the number of inmates rose recently. Last month, the number of inmates was over 4,500, which was around 5,500 yesterday.

Earlier this year, between February 8 and March 1, police arrested over 30,000 people, including 12,500 during the "Operation Devil Hunt".

Liberation War founding pillar of the state

FROM PAGE 12

According to the post, the NCP stands firmly against "Islamophobia and communalism and does not support religious extremism or fanaticism."

"NCP does not subscribe to either secularist or theocratic ideologies; rather, its goal is to build an inclusive democratic state through the practice of religious coexistence, harmony, and mutual responsibility and empathy."

On national identity, the statement said, "NCP embraces a civilisational national identity instead of one based on nation, religion, or tribe. NCP will develop a national culture by embracing the civilisational identity of the Bengal delta, a confluence of many languages and cultures."

Women's empowerment was listed

as a core priority in Nahid's post.

He noted, "NCP will take concrete steps to ensure women's education, health, safety, leadership, and employment."

"Under family law, NCP will work to realise women's rightful share of property."

Regarding foreign policy, the NCP has taken a strong stance against Indian regional dominance.

"Indian hegemonism and Hindutva in South Asia pose a cultural and geopolitical threat to Bangladesh. NCP will adopt a firm political stance against these hegemonic tendencies. NCP believes Bangladesh should expand strategic relations with other states based on justice, dignity, civilisation, and national interest," the NCP convener wrote.

He also mentioned that the NCP envisions the creation of a new economic zone in the Bay of Bengal region, centred around Bangladesh.

"NCP aims to build an inequality-free, justice-based, corruption-free socio-economic system that resembles a welfare state. Education, public health, agriculture, climate, urban management, labour rights, and employment will be the key policy areas for NCP."

Nahid also reflected on the party's stance against authoritarianism.

"NCP believes that to build a truly democratic state system, restructuring of the state, institutional reform, and the drafting of a new constitution are necessary. Replacing the fascist system with a new political arrangement is NCP's foremost political duty."

The hum beneath our harvests

FROM PAGE 12

substances disorient bees, impair memory and navigation, and often prove fatal. Entire hives have collapsed overnight. For small-scale beekeepers, the damage is devastating.

Equally worrying is habitat loss. As forests give way to brick kilns, roads, and industrial sprawl, wild bees lose access to flowering plants and safe nesting sites. Traditional rural apiculture has sharply declined. Climate change adds another layer of stress, disrupting seasonal rhythms and floral cycles. During a heatwave in April last year, honeybee colonies in Satkhira reportedly abandoned their hives in search of cooler zones.

These patterns risk unravelling more than just bee populations -- they threaten our agricultural cycles and ecological balance. But some local initiatives are showing promise.

In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and districts like Jamalpur and Jashore, community-led beekeeping

projects are empowering women and indigenous farmers. With support from NGOs and the Department of Agricultural Extension, these groups are setting up apiaries, improving yields, and earning supplementary income.

An especially creative solution has emerged in response to human-elephant conflict. In areas like Horikhola, Teknaf -- where refugee settlements and elephant corridors intersect -- communities have adopted beehive fencing, a technique inspired by Kenya. Backed by IUCN Bangladesh and UNHCR, the method was introduced in 2021 after a feasibility study.

Here, 20 farmers, including women-led households, were trained in beekeeping. Their hives now form a "beehive fence" protecting homes within a one-kilometre radius. Elephants, which instinctively avoid bees, are deterred without harm. By March 2025, over 30kg of honey had been harvested, and elephant incursions had notably dropped.

This rare initiative offers a win-win: mitigating human-wildlife conflict

while safeguarding pollinators and livelihoods.

Each year, World Bee Day is marked with posters, school campaigns, and awareness drives. Companies like Syngenta Bangladesh have led youth programmes spotlighting bee protection. These efforts matter -- but they are not enough.

We need structural change. Stricter regulations on harmful pesticides. Legal safeguards for habitats. Research on native bee species. Real investment in sustainable farming. As a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Bangladesh is obligated to act.

Bees don't need rescuing. They just need us to stop harming them. And in doing so, we protect our own future.

This World Bee Day, let us place pollinators at the heart of our environmental discourse. Let us stop poisoning our fields. Let us plant flowers, not factories. Let the buzz return -- steady and strong.

Because when bees thrive, we all thrive.

Outrage, shock over Nusraat Faria's arrest

FROM PAGE 12

The actor was escorted to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka amid tight security around 10:00am yesterday, a day after she was arrested at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport before boarding a flight.

During the half-hour hearing, she stood silently in the dock.

At one point, the investigator was asked to submit a report verifying Faria's visa-related documents, which had been presented in support of the bail petition.

On March 27 this year, one Enamul Haque, who suffered bullet injuries on July 19 last year during the protests in Bhatara, filed the case with the court against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, 17 actors, and 265 others.

On April 29, the officer-in-charge of Bhatara Police Station registered it as a First Information Report in line with the court's directive.

WHAT THE ADVISERS SAID

Speaking to reporters at the Secretariat yesterday afternoon, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said, "If we had allowed her to leave, you would have said, 'Sir, you let her go.'"

He made the comments though he and Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam on several occasions stated that no innocent persons would be harassed or arrested even if they were listed as accused in cases.

The IGP had earlier acknowledged that many people had been falsely implicated in cases filed in the aftermath of the July uprising.

In response to a question yesterday, Jahangir said, "We have repeatedly said we will ensure no one faces unnecessary harassment or suffering. Legal action will be taken only against those involved in criminal activities. No innocent person will be punished under any circumstances."

In a Facebook post, Cultural Affairs Adviser Farooki said, "I generally try not to speak beyond the responsibilities of my ministry. But I do have an identity -- I was a part of this industry and will be returning to it. The arrest of Nusraat Faria is an embarrassing incident for us."

"It is the responsibility of our

government to bring actual offenders from the July [uprising] cases to justice. When it comes to blanket cases, our stance is clear: no one will be arrested without a preliminary investigation indicating involvement. And that policy was being followed."

Farooki noted that although a case had existed against Faria for some time, there had been no apparent move by the government to arrest her prior to the conclusion of the investigation. "But the incident occurred right after she arrived at the airport."

He also drew connections between the timing of the arrest and recent political tensions, particularly public outrage over former president Abdul Hamid's travel abroad.

"Perhaps, following the outrage over Abdul Hamid's departure, these events unfolded due to 'over-nervousness' ... These incidents are in no way justifiable."

Farooki expressed hope that Faria would receive appropriate legal recourse and concluded by urging more sensitivity in handling sweeping cases.

NCP CONDEMNES

The arrest and imprisonment of Nusraat Faria in an attempted murder case has turned the judicial process of the country into a mockery, National Citizen Party (NCP) said in a statement yesterday.

"We have witnessed how, earlier this month, former president Abdul Hamid, who was accused of orchestrating attacks and shootings during the July uprising, left the country without any obstacles. The identities of 626 individuals who took shelter in different cantonments following the uprising remain undisclosed."

"Moreover, the fallen fascist regime and its supporters, who were directly involved in the July massacre, continue to operate freely in public spaces and on social media, engaging in anti-citizen activities," reads the statement.

The NCP said that the arrest and imprisonment in such a showpiece case where people were made accused sweepingly, have set a precedent of undermining the judicial process regarding the July massacre.

CAAB rejoinder, our reply

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh's aviation sector. Over the decades, CAAB has consistently worked in alignment with international standards, upholding the principles of the Chicago Convention and ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

2. It is noted with deep concern and dismay that CAAB observes a series of recent publications in a well-circulated national daily "The Daily Star" containing misperception on aviation regulations and practices. Such reporting not only threatens to mislead the public but also severely undermines the reputation of Bangladesh's civil aviation system on the international stage. This rejoinder is issued to formally address these repeated misrepresentations and to reaffirm CAAB's unwavering commitment to professionalism, transparency, and international obligations.

3. The report claimed in the first part of the news "Time after time, the internal safety department of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh uncovered irregularities in pilot licensing and raised concerns about aviation safety, only to be overridden by the civil aviation's higher authorities". The fact is that CAAB conducts investigations as routine affair in case of any reported violation of regulations and resolves the issue as per recommendation of the investigation. There are no instances that CAAB did not act on the recommendations of any investigations. Therefore, the claim made in the report "Only to be overridden by civil aviation's higher authority" is not valid.

4. **Conflict of interest** The report on "Chowdhury Md Zia Ul Kabir" claims "Zia signed his own licence, he was the flight safety regulator charged with ensuring that pilot licences were compliant, exposing a blatant conflict of interest" claims that there was conflict of interest. The CAAB procedure of issuance of license involves detailed steps conducted by various personnel and needs to be approved by the Chairman, CAAB. As the then Director of FS&R division, Chowdhury Md Zia Ul Kabir was the authorized person to sign on all licenses on behalf of the Chairman. As such there was no conflict of interest.

5. **No Experience** It is general practice across the aviation world, the experience of higher or similar category aircraft is considered while designating some pilot as instructor of a rare type aircraft. The report on "Captain Kabir-ul-Alam" claims "Captain Kabir-ul-Alam was allowed to perform an exam flight to be certified as a "Designated Check Pilot" for an aircraft called Fokker 50, a CAAB letter from November 5, 2023, shows," which was a non-conformance with ICAO and CAAB regulations. The fact is that the said Captain Kabir-ul-Alam was "Authorized" as DCP-D (Designated Check Pilot for Flight Simulator Training Devices or FSTD) for Fokker 27 MK 50 FSTD. Captain Kabir-ul-Alam fulfilled the prerequisites of CAAB for designating him as SFI (Synthetic Flight Instructor) for Fokker 27 MK 50. He was then authorized as DCP-D on the said aircraft considering his substantial experience as instructor and check pilot. No violation of rules was committed in the said authorization.

6. **False flying records:** The case of "Captain Nuruddin Al Masood" is a sub-judice matter.

7. **Less than Half Qualified** The report on "Captain Abdur Rahman Akand" claims "But before being certified as an ATPL, Akand flew only 154.35 hours -- less than a third required for such a sophisticated licence, according to the documents he submitted to CAAB as part of the regulator's internal inquiry". The related ICAO Regulation ICAO Annex-1 para 2.6.3.1.11 a says "500 hours as pilot-in-command under supervision or 250 hours, either as pilot-in-command or made up by not less than 70 hours as pilot-in-command and the necessary additional flight time as pilot-in-command under supervision". Captain Abdur Rahman Akand had logged more than 500 hours as Pilot-in-command under supervision and a grand total of 4,000 hours plus as pilot before applying for the ATPL. Therefore, he definitely had fulfilled the requirements and there was no violation of ICAO and CAAB regulations.

8. a. **Rules Overlooked (CPL Issue)** The report claims "10 students from Galaxy seeking CPLs were required to fly 300nm on the Raishahi Saidpur-Jashore-Raishahi route and make full stops in the transit airports. The students instead flew from Raishahi to Saidpur and then went back to Raishahi, and did the same with Jashore". Flying via Raishahi for refueling purposes is an essential requirement when no other nearby aerodromes are available to continue flying the next route. Here the requirements of compliance "full-stop landings at two different aerodromes" were fulfilled. The 300 NM cross-country flights being

conducted by the Flying Schools are in full compliance with CAR 84 and ANO 1.

b. **Rules Overlooked (PPL Issue)** The report claims "The students flying the 150nm "solo flights" also had their teachers onboard with them even though this was supposed to be unsupervised flights, meaning they flew their exam flight with help, documents show." ICAO permits flight by a student pilot without a licence, rating or endorsement, by stating "solo flight time under the supervision of an authorized flight instructor". Both CAR 84 and ANO 1 have promulgated the same. The 150 NM cross-country flights conducted by the flying schools are in full compliance with CAR 84 and ANO 1. However, as conflicting information received from Galaxy Flying Academy and Bangladesh Flying Academy & General Aviation, CAAB is scrutinizing the issue in view of existing rules and regulations. Should there be any non-conformance found, CAAB will take action as per regulation.

9. **Suspicious service** CAAB took initiative to automate the pilot licensing exam system. Considering the high cost involved with foreign software company, CAAB started computerbased exam system designed by local vendor. The exam was controlled by CAAB personnel. CAAB never received any complain regarding the computer-based exam system. However, the administrative process to acquiring this software was not completed for various reasons. This matter is under scrutiny. Mentionable, CAAB initiated the process to acquire new software with upgraded features.

10. **Selective defamation of individuals in support a group with vested interest**

a. The report deliberately misled the readers by giving references as fragments without the full context and its explanatory notes.

b. The report selectively tried to defame some group of personnel with false allegation basing on self-interpretation of related rules and regulations. It hints to the possibility of serving the purpose of some groups having vested interest.

c. The report deliberately undermined the credibility of the pilot community of the civil aviation industry of Bangladesh.

11. **Undermining Reform in Bangladesh's Aviation Sector** Although CAAB has made significant efforts to modernize its operations, align with international standards, and promote transparency, its progress has been consistently challenged by entrenched interest groups. These groups, driven by a desire to preserve non-transparent practices and retain undue influence within the aviation sector, have actively attempted to obstruct reforms intended to strengthen institutional capacity and accountability. Ironically, these efforts to tarnish CAAB's reputation have intensified as the authority accelerates its compliance with international aviation standards. The report bears the trace of the same intention and surely detrimental not only to the growth of aviation sector of Bangladesh but also the credibility of Bangladesh's Civil Aviation sector across the globe.

12. In view of the above, the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) strongly condemns the continued dissemination of unfounded and misleading reports by "The Daily Star". These actions not only misrepresent the integrity and professionalism of CAAB, but also pose a serious threat to public trust, aviation stakeholder confidence, and Bangladesh's international standing as a responsible Member State of ICAO.

13. CAAB urges all concerned media platforms to act with responsibility and refrain from publishing speculative or unverified information relating to civil aviation. Any attempts to undermine the credibility of CAAB without substantiated evidence will be viewed as a direct affront to the nation's strategic interests and regulatory sovereignty in the aviation sector.

14. CAAB remains open to constructive dialogue, transparency and accountability; but will not hesitate to take lawful and appropriate measures to safeguard its institutional dignity and to uphold the commitments of Bangladesh to ICAO as per the Chicago Convention.

Our Reply

According to CAAB's own inquiry, the training process of at least 142 pilots, many of whom received their licences over the last two years, were not up to the mark. Many did not complete the required flying hours or the crucial solo flight. At least two falsified their flight records. And CAAB knew all of these, but The Daily Star failed to obtain any records or any official statement that any of these licencees faced any action.

The Daily Star specifically narrated the details of a meeting held on May 21, 2024, by the licencing head of that time, where multiple objections from CAAB's own safety experts were overridden to grant licences to two pilots who did not complete their exam flight as per the pre-requisites outlined by aviation rules. The Daily Star has verified the discussion of the meeting, and the resultant decision taken, using the meeting minutes itself.

As regards the conflict of interest of Chowdhury Md Zia Ul Kabir signing his own Air Transport Pilot Licence, the highest level of certification for a pilot, our report, citing the CAAB chairman, mentioned that the CAAB chief approves licences before they are signed by a designated official.

We are strained to believe that the head of the organisation is responsible for checking every single flight log of every single pilot applying for a licence, since there is a fully-staffed department dedicated to it. At that time Zia signed his own ATPL licence in 2018, he was the head of that department. While working on the report, The Daily Star did not find any guidelines in CAAB regarding what alternate steps are to be followed if the head of that department wants to apply for a licence to ensure due diligence.

The rejoinder also states that no rules were violated in authorising Captain Kazi Kabirul Alam to become a check pilot of a flight he never flew.

The Daily Star reviewed CAAB's guidelines on the designation of DCP-D and found that the check pilot must "Hold (or held) ATPL with instrument rating (as applicable) endorsed on type." In addition, the pilot must "have accumulated a minimum of 1,000 hours pilot-in-command of which minimum 750 hours pilot-in-command on type."

According to CAAB's own Air Navigation Order, Fokker 27 MK 50 is a higher category aircraft, and a fully different aircraft from the plane Kabirul has experience in, which is Fokker 27.

The rejoinder stated that Captain Abdur Rahman Akand had fulfilled the requirements to get his ATPL and there was no violation of ICAO and CAAB regulations.

The Daily Star has reviewed the same law that CAAB cites in its rejoinder and found that even a Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL), the licence a pilot is required to take before getting the ATPL, cannot be issued with 26.5 hours pilot-in-command time, because ICAO Annex-1 in para 2.4.3.1 says that the applicant shall have completed not less than 100 hours as pilot-in-command or, in the case of a course of approved training, 70 hours as pilot-in-command.

The rejoinder said the 300 NM cross-country flights being conducted by the two flying schools are in full compliance with Civil Aviation Rules, 1984 and Air Navigation Order.

The two aerodromes in which the students were supposed to stop are Jashore and Saidpur. It would be highly concerning if there are no refuelling facilities available at Jashore and Saidpur airports, as the rejoinder suggests, since these are two fully functional airports serving dozens of commercial flights each day.

The rejoinder said the 150 NM cross-country flights conducted by the flying schools are in full compliance with Civil Aviation Rules, 1984 and Air Navigation Order. It also said that CAAB is scrutinizing the issue in view of existing rules and regulations. Should there be any non-conformance found, CAAB will take action as per regulation."

The Civil Aviation Rules, 1984 and Air Navigation Order state that students flying with an instructor on board cannot log that flight as a solo flight. The flights then have to be categorised as "dual" or "solo under supervision", as the case may be.

The rejoinder said the pilot licencing exams are controlled by CAAB personnel and not any external vendor.

The Daily Star has included in its report an interview with the "vendor" in question who had said on the record that CAAB does not have control over the data or the source code.

The rejoinder made vague, unsubstantiated accusations about The Daily Star serving vested groups in achieving their goals. The Daily Star neither serves the interests, nor has any liaison with any of these unidentified groups that CAAB mentions in its rejoinder. The Daily Star rejects these vague accusations, and has shown the merits of the points it made in its reports.



40 students fall

FROM PAGE 4
upazila health and family planning officer, said the children likely fell ill due to low blood pressure and physical weakness.

When asked about so many students becoming unwell at once, she said the incident appeared to be a case of "mass hysteria", a psychological phenomenon where groups of people suddenly exhibit similar symptoms without a physical cause.

"There's nothing to panic about. Most of the children have already recovered and returned home," Dr Tahmina added.

Bera UNO Mir Morshedul Islam said a three-member investigation committee, led by the upazila secondary education officer, has been formed to determine the exact cause of the incident.

"The actual reason will be known after receiving the committee's report," the UNO said.

3 children

FROM PAGE 4
According to family members, Khadija, a resident of the Golpata Mosque area, found the object and brought it home thinking it was a toy ball.

She was joined by Sajib and Ayesha, while playing with the object on an open field, it exploded.

Abul Hasanat, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said police had visited the site and were investigating the incident.

Search committee

FROM PAGE 3
how responsibly they perform their duties. Without committed and objective members, a committee serves little purpose," he said.

He said the committee should now evaluate the performance of existing appointees and recommend corrective measures where necessary.

He also said four universities under autonomous systems have their own recruitment procedures. Now it is essential to establish a uniform policy and permanent governance framework for all universities. In the absence of an Education Commission, the UGC should take this responsibility, he added.

"Like its predecessors, this interim government acts only after unrest breaks out. Problems should be addressed when first raised, not after road blockades and demonstrations."

He suggested that the search committee or a separate body under the UGC should evaluate current leadership across universities and take steps to prevent further governance failures.

Meanwhile, a former UGC member questioned the committee's mandate, given that appointments have already been made at over 45 public universities.

He said in 2007, a caretaker government formed a similar search committee to appoint VCs to universities outside the four governed by the University Ordinance 1973 - Dhaka, Rajshahi, Jahangirnagar, and Chittagong. That initiative became ineffective after the Awami League came to power in 2009.

The UGC's "Strategic Plan for Higher Education 2006-2026" also

flagged the existing VC appointment system as vulnerable to political interference and recommended a legally empowered national search committee.

Similarly, the Education Commission (2003), led by Prof Mohammad Moniruzzaman Miah, proposed that such a committee be headed by the chief justice or a nominated judge, alongside academics and key officials from the PSC and UGC.

Contacted, Nurun Akhtar, additional secretary (university) of the Secondary and Higher Education Division, said the committee would operate according to the responsibilities outlined in the official notification.

Asked about its relevance at this stage, she said, "They will work for future appointments, if necessary."

She declined to comment on whether it would have been more appropriate to form the committee before the latest round of appointments.

Efforts to reach Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar and Senior Secretary Siddique Zobiair for comments were unsuccessful, as they did not respond to repeated phone calls.

No one has

FROM PAGE 3
He said, "More than 12 crore citizens' information has been stored in the EC's NID database, and there have been instances of data leaks. In light of the current situation, all necessary measures are being taken to prevent the risk of data breaches," he added.

He said all necessary measures will be taken in the future to keep the data repository secure.

Will focus

FROM PAGE 3
months ago, concluded yesterday. Through these continued dialogues, we have reached consensus on many issues, though some differences remain. In the second phase, we will address the points of disagreement one by one to move quickly in drafting the National Charter," he said.

The CPB delegation was led by General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince.

The party has expressed disagreement with several proposals put forward by the consensus commission. These include changing the constitutional name of the country, altering the four fundamental principles of the Constitution, introducing a bicameral parliament, forming a National Constitutional Council, and lowering the age limits for voters and parliamentary candidates.

The party also opposed proposals to hold referendums on reforms and to shorten the term of the President.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Prince said the electoral system needs fundamental reform.

"The people don't just want an election. They want to know whether manipulation will once again take place, whether the old reign of fear will return," Prince said.

Public opinion is essential for a free and credible election, he stressed.

The consensus commission began work on February 15 and launched formal talks on March 20. Since then, it has held meetings with 33 political parties.

PRAYER TIMING	
MAY 20	
Fazr	Zhor
4-05	12-45
Asr	Maghrib
5-00	6-40
Esha	JAMAAT
8-00	4-40
	1-15
	5-15
	6-45
	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Over 700 bridges

FROM PAGE 3
RHD had no structured bridge inspection practice, and this first comprehensive inspection revealed the extent of the problem.

He said overloading; climate change impacts like rising temperatures, humidity, and salinity; and inadequate maintenance budgets have contributed to poor condition of many structures. Regarding current efforts, he said maintenance work is underway based on a priority list.

However, delays are being caused by challenges such as drawing designs for a large number of bridges, funding shortages, and the limited capacity of local firms.

He also said Bangladesh still lacks its own bridge construction code and currently relies on foreign codes. "We have now taken steps to develop a national bridge code," he added.

At the event, Sheikh Moinuddin, special assistant to the chief adviser for the Road Transport and Bridges Ministry, said although engineers use the AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) code, it should be adapted to local conditions, including climate factors.

He stressed the need for better collaboration between departments and between professionals and academia, breaking the existing siloed approach. He also encouraged drawing on the experience of Bangladeshi experts living abroad.

Prof Nur Yazdani, director of the Next-Gen Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure Lab at the University of Texas, said bridge inspections should be more structured.

He also said Bangladesh should develop its own load model based on local vehicle types. BUET Vice Chancellor Prof ABM Badruzzaman

called for greater collaboration between local and expatriate experts.

Prof Shamsul Hoque of BUET's Civil Engineering Department said structural reforms are necessary and political leadership must take initiative in this regard.

He stressed that proper planning is more important than just monitoring, and suggested the metro rail authority conduct a technical review of the first metro rail project to avoid flaws in future ones.

RHD Chief Engineer Syed Moinul Hasan; Bangladesh Bridge Authority Chief Engineer Quazi Muhammad Ferdous; and Prof Tanvir Manzur, director of BUET JIDPUS; also spoke.

SASEC Road Connectivity Project-2 Director Waliur Rahman chaired the programme.

2 more cases

FROM PAGE 3
According to the case statement, Sajal joined the anti-discrimination movement on July 20 last year, when AL men allegedly opened fire on students on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway. Sajal was shot in the abdomen and later died at a local hospital.

The complaint claims the attack was carried out under the direction of top AL leaders.

Meanwhile, Kamrul Hasan from Bhuyapur yesterday filed a case with the court of Tangail Judicial Magistrate Rumelia Sirajam, accusing Hasina and 193 others of organising a "dummy election" and vote rigging in 2024.

Former minister Muhammad Abdur Razaque, ex-lawmaker Soto Monir, ex-CEC Kazi Habibul Awal, ex-IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, and former Tangail deputy commissioner Mohammad Shahidul Islam are among the 193 accused.

Call for justice gets louder

FROM PAGE 3
Biplobi Chhatra Moitree, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, and Samajtantrik Chhatra Federation.

The coalition alleged that both the university administration and law enforcement agencies had failed to investigate Shammo's killing properly.

They also condemned how the university handled

the case of Tofazzal Hossain, a person with intellectual disability, who was killed at a DU dormitory in 2024.

Roktobeej Arko of Chhatra Union read out the demands, which include the formation of a "Justice Assurance Committee" comprising Shammo's family members, students, and faculty members to ensure

transparency and justice in the case.

The platform further demanded that CCTV footage related to the murder be made public.

"We were told footage would be collected, but law enforcers now claim no footage from the past ten days exists," said Abidur Rahman Mishu, literature secretary of Surja Sen Hall JCD.

বাংলাদেশ সরকারী কর্ম কমিশন

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ সরকারী কর্ম কমিশন সচিবালয়

আগারগাঁও, শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭

www.bpsc.gov.bd

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা বাংলাদেশ সরকারী কর্ম কমিশন সচিবালয়ে ব্যবহারের জন্য ০৩ টি আয়রন সেক ভন্ট লকার ক্রয় করার নিমিত্ত উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। এ সংক্রান্ত পূর্ণাঙ্গ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাংলাদেশ সরকারী কর্ম কমিশন সচিবালয়ের নিজস্ব ওয়েব সাইটে (www.bpsc.gov.bd) প্রকাশ করা হয়েছে। এ ছাড়াও পূর্ণাঙ্গ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি কমিশন সচিবালয়ের নোটিশ বোর্ডে পাওয়া যাবে। দরপত্র সিডিউল উপপরিচালক (প্রশাসন-৩) এর অফিস কক্ষে আগামী ০২/০৬/২০২৫ তারিখ ৩:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত পাওয়া যাবে। দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ০৩/০৬/২০২৫, বেলা ১:০০ ঘটিকা।

সাহিনা আক্তার
উপপরিচালক (প্রশাসন-৩)

GD-1209

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Motijheel PWD Division
Segunbagicha, Dhaka.
Phone : 02-22226721

e-Tender Notice for Corrigendum

e-Tender are invited in the national e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following works details are given below :

Tender ID	Corrigendum No.01	Tender Closing (date & time)	Tender Opening (date & time)
1111870	Corrigendum for BoQ	28-May-2025 12:00	28-May-2025 12:00
1111845	Corrigendum for BoQ	28-May-2025 12:00	28-May-2025 12:00

Amendment/Corrigendum issued : 01 Corrigendum for BoQ

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The Fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any Schedule Bank up to mentioned above. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Abdullah Al Momin)
Executive Engineer
Motijheel PWD Division
Segunbagicha, Dhaka.

GD-1203

বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Bangladesh Power Development Board

OFFICE OF THE
MANAGER (Operation)
KHULNA 330MW CAPP,
BPDB, KHALISHPUR,
KHULNA.

Memo no- 27.11.4700.485.40.011.2025-138 Date:14/05/2025

e-Tender Notice (Open Tendering Method)

e-Tender will be invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of goods/ works as state below:

SI no	Tender/ Proposal package	Description of works	Tender ID no.	Tender Publishing (Date & Time)	Tender last selling (Date & Time)	Last Date of Security Submission (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)
01	GR-38	Procurement of CCW Scale Inhibitor for Cooling Tower of Khulna 330 MW CAPP.	1111918	15-May-2025 at 14:30	29-May-2025 at 13:00	29-May-2025 at 13:30	29-May-2025 at 17:30	29-May-2025 at 17:30

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline / hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the national e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches according to time & date mentioned in the above table.

Further information & guidelines are available in the national e-gp system portal & from e-gp help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

বিদ্যুৎ/জন- ১২৮২ (২)/১৯/০৫/২৫

(Md. Jamil Hossain)
I.D No.- 7-0030
Chief Chemist
Khulna 330 MW CAPP, BPDB, Khalishpur, Khulna.

GD-1214

Bank Asia PLC.
Corporate Office (Registered Office)
Bank Asia Tower, 32 & 34 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue
Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215

Bank Asia

NOTICE OF THE TWENTY SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
(VIRTUAL MEETING THROUGH DIGITAL PLATFORM)

Notice is hereby given to all members of Bank Asia PLC. ("the Company") that the 26th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of the Company will be held on 17 June 2025 at 11:00 a.m. virtually by using digital platform through the following web-link, <https://agmbd.live/Bankasia2025> (in pursuant with Directive No. BSEC/CMRRCD/2009-193/08 dated 10 March 2021 and Directive No. BSEC/ICAD/SRIC/2024/318/87 dated 27 March 2024 of BSEC, both issued by Bangladesh Securities & Exchange Commission (BSEC)), to transact the following business and to adopt necessary resolutions:

AGENDA

- To receive, consider and adopt the Profit and Loss Account of the Company for the year ended on 31 December 2024, and the Balance Sheet as at that date together with the Reports of the Directors and the Auditors thereon.
- To declare dividend out of the profits for the year ended on December 31, 2024.
- To elect/reelect Directors in accordance with the provisions of law and the Articles of Association of the Company.
- To confirm the appointment of independent director(s).
- To appoint Statutory Auditor of the Company for the term until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and to fix their remuneration.
- To appoint Compliance Auditor as per Corporate Governance Code for the year 2025 and to fix their remuneration.
- To transact any other business with the permission of the Chair.

Dated: 20 May 2025
Dhaka

By order of the Board,
Zahid Hasan
Company Secretary (Acting)

NOTES

- The Record Date of the Company will be on **26 May 2025**. Trading of the Company's shares in the Stock Exchanges will be suspended on the Record Date.
- The Board of Directors has recommended 20% Dividend in combination of 10% Cash and 10% Stock.
- The shareholders whose names will appear in the Register of Members of the Company as at the close of business on the Record Date, i.e., 26 May 2025, will be entitled to attend and vote at the AGM and to the dividend declared in the AGM.
- In view of the Directive No. BSEC/CMRRCD/2009-193/08 dated March 10, 2021 and Directive No. BSEC/ICAD/SRIC/2024/318/87 dated 27 March 2024, the ensuing 26th AGM of the Company would be conducted virtually through digital platform or online platform. Therefore, the shareholders are requested to attend the 26th AGM through online live portal. The detailed procedures to attend the meeting will be communicated to the shareholders' email ID in due course and it will also be available on Bank's website at 'www.bankasia-bd.com'.
- Shareholders may login to the system 48 (forty-eight) hours before and during the meeting. For any guidance and help during the meeting, the members may contact the cell no. +8801711198680.
- Any member of the Company entitled to attend and vote at the AGM may appoint a proxy to attend and vote on his /her behalf. The proxy must be a member of the Company.
- The instrument appointing a proxy duly stamped and signed by the member must be submitted at the Registered Office of the Company or through email to 'ba.share@bankasia-bd.com' at least 48 (forty eight) hours before the AGM.
- Election of Directors will be held in the vacant offices of Directors. Election schedule will be displayed in the notice board at the Registered Office in due course. Election rules will be available at the Registered Office of the Company and also on the Bank's website at 'www.bankasia-bd.com'.
- Members are requested to update their 12 digit Taxpayer's Identification Number (e-TIN) through their respective Depository Participant (DP)/Brokerage House before the Record Date. Without having e-TIN, Income Tax will be deducted @15% instead of @10% from payable Cash Dividend.
- Members are requested to update their respective Bank Account Information (Bank Name, Branch Name, 13-Digit A/C No., 9 Digit Routing No.) Address, Mobile Number, Email Number etc. through their respective Depository Participant (DP)/Brokerage House before the Record Date.
- The concerned Brokerage Houses are requested to provide us with a statement having details of margin loan holders (i.e., Shareholders' name, BOID numbers, client-wise shareholding position, gross dividend receivable, applicable tax rate and net dividend receivable) as on the Record Date along with the name of the contact person of Brokerage House to the Company's Share Department or through email to 'ba.share@bankasia-bd.com' at Registered Office on or before **01 June 2025**. The Brokerage Houses are also requested to provide us with their bank name, account number and routing number etc.
- As per BSEC Notification dated June 20, 2018, Annual Report 2024 will be duly sent in soft form to the members' email addresses available in their Beneficial Owner (BO) accounts maintained with the Depository. The soft copy of the Annual Report 2024 will also be available on the Bank's website at 'www.bankasia-bd.com'. The members may also collect the Annual Report 2024 from the Company's Share Department at Registered Office in person.

'Start local, think global': Samiran Gupta urges Bangladesh to shape the internet's future



MOHAMMAD KAWSAR UDDIN

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is critical to maintaining the stable and secure operation of the global internet. In an exclusive interview, Samiran Gupta, Vice President of Stakeholder Engagement and Managing Director for Asia Pacific at ICANN, discusses the state of internet infrastructure in Bangladesh, local domain adoption, universal acceptance, and the importance of inclusive participation in internet governance.

How would you assess the state of internet infrastructure and the operational community in Bangladesh?

We've been working with the technical community in Bangladesh for a long time, focusing on capacity-building and training—particularly around the country code top-level domains (ccTLDs) .bd and .bangla. This includes collaboration with key organisations such as BDNOC, ISPAB, BASIS, and BDIX. We've also supported BTCL in improving operational practices.

When the .bd domain experienced downtime recently due to a DNSSEC issue, ICANN provided technical assistance to help restore services quickly. Our involvement is both

planned and responsive, depending on what the local community needs.

We've also been actively promoting Universal Acceptance (UA) and Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) in Bangladesh by sponsoring events and raising awareness. Adopting global best practices is crucial for ensuring the resilience and security of the Domain Name System (DNS), which remains central to ICANN's mission.

What is your view on the current adoption of .bd and .bangla domains? How can this be improved?

Adoption of local domains is largely market-driven and varies from

country to country. In Bangladesh, a stronger local marketing effort is likely needed. The community should explore the barriers to adoption and identify actionable steps to increase use. ICANN is ready to provide any necessary support, but the initiative must come from within the local internet ecosystem.

Is there a need to raise awareness about Universal Acceptance (UA) in Bangladesh?

Definitely. UA is a technical challenge but also a user experience issue. We've developed a 12-module academic course for integration into

university curricula, which includes programming and implementation best practices. Increasing awareness, particularly among the local technical community, would support broader internet inclusion, especially for Bangla-speaking users.

ICANN holds three global conferences each year. Could Bangladesh host one in the future?

We're open to proposals from all regions. Host city selection depends on several factors—connectivity, accommodation, venue quality, IT infrastructure, and security. Detailed criteria are available on the ICANN website. If any organisation in Bangladesh is interested, we'd be happy to discuss the requirements.

What role can non-technical participants—such as policymakers, journalists, and civil society—play in ICANN's work?

ICANN's multi-stakeholder model is built to be inclusive. Non-technical actors are encouraged to join and contribute. We recommend starting with the ICANN for Beginners page, which offers a guided entry point. The Asia-Pacific Regional At-Large Organisation (APRALO) is particularly active, and my team is always ready to assist newcomers.

How can ICANN foster greater involvement from journalists?

Our meetings are open to everyone who registers. While journalists don't have a dedicated track, they're encouraged to attend and engage with topics that interest them—be it policy, technology, or civil society. My team is always open to facilitating conversations with media professionals.

What's the best way for individuals to actively participate in ICANN's work?

Start locally. Attend regional or community events to build connections and understand the context. When you attend a global ICANN meeting, you'll be much better prepared. We also encourage joining working groups, which are open to anyone with the time and interest. ICANN's policy process is bottom-up, so every voice matters.

Are ICANN resources available in languages other than English? Will there be materials in Bangla?

Traditionally, ICANN provides content in the six UN languages. But we're now piloting an AI-based translation service to support additional languages, including Bangla, especially for the upcoming round of new gTLD applications. These translations may not be perfect initially, so we're keen to work with local communities to improve them.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

THE BOSSMAN
BY E. RAZA RONNY

TO INCREASE MORALE, I WILL NOW GIVE AN INSPIRING MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH!

* AHEM *
WORK HARDER!

HONESTLY, THAT'S THE MOST HONEST SPEECH WE'VE HEARD.

YEAH, REFRESHING.

Bridging Bangladesh's skills gap

ZARIF FAIAZ

Bangladesh's vocational training sector has expanded rapidly in recent years, particularly in information and communications technology (ICT). Thousands of private training centres now operate across the country, offering similar types of courses in areas such as web development, hardware maintenance, and digital marketing. However, the absence of a standardised system of curriculum design, delivery and assessment has contributed to wide disparities in the quality of training offered.

To address these challenges, the Government established the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA). NSDA's role includes coordinating training institutions, creating Competency Standards, and (CS) approving curricula for a wide range of trades. Standardised training not only allows trainees to undergo uniform assessments and receive government-recognised certification, but also facilitates better connections between training institutions and employers.

Addressing evolving market demands

Unfortunately the skills development domain faces some persistent challenges of keeping up with the continuously evolving industries changing skills demand. New trades and occupations continue to emerge in both the ICT and agro-processing sectors, as industries adopt new technologies and expand production. As a result, continuously updating existing curriculums or development of new curriculums for new trades has become essential.

In response, NSDA and partner organisations have begun developing and validating curricula for emerging roles. One such partner is Swisscontact's Building Youth Employment Through Skills (BYETS) programme, which is working to fill gaps in both ICT and agro-processing training.

BYETS has been working closely with seven large-scale local manufacturers in the food industry to strengthen the compliance-related knowledge and skills of their workers. As these companies are already exporting to international markets and are keen to expand further, ensuring that their workforce is well-versed in global compliance standards is not just beneficial—it is essential. In the food industry, compliance with international standards is critical, as failure to meet these requirements can restrict access to global markets and limit business growth.

To address this need, the BYETS project introduced work-based training directly at the factory level, helping workers gain practical knowledge on maintaining international compliance standards. However, during implementation, it became clear that standardizing this training could deliver even greater

value to both the industry and its workforce.

To respond to this gap, BYETS collaborated with the NSDA and the Agro Food Industry Skills Council (AFISC) to develop a CS titled "Production Supervisor for the Food Industry." This CS is designed to support the development of a more skilled supervisory workforce—capable of managing production processes while ensuring adherence to global compliance requirements. The CS has already been approved by NSDA and is now publicly available for any training facility to adopt.

Moreover, BYETS is actively encouraging manufacturers to register as NSDA-approved training providers. This would allow companies to deliver in-house training using the new CS, certify their employees at their own convenience, and significantly reduce training costs. Most importantly, it will enhance their readiness to meet international export standards—making their businesses more competitive and sustainable in the global market.



Modernising ICT training

In the ICT sector, training remains popular but uneven. While the number of programmes has grown, many are based on outdated content and fail to reflect current industry needs. Most courses focus on a few saturated trades, leaving other high-demand areas underserved.

BYETS began its work in the ICT sector by offering training in widely recognized trades such as digital marketing, graphic design, and web development. However, early field experience revealed a significant gap: while many development programs continue to focus on these common trades, there is a growing demand for niche ICT skills that are highly valued in today's job market. One such trade is Software Quality Assurance (SQA)—a critical function in the software development lifecycle that ensures the quality and reliability of digital products.

Recognizing this opportunity, the BYETS project, in collaboration with private sector partners, initiated a training program in SQA. However, the team quickly discovered that no national Competency Standard (CS) existed for this trade, making it difficult to offer structured, certifiable training.

To address this challenge, BYETS partnered with the ICT Industry Skills Council (ISC) and

jointly worked to develop a formal Competency Standard for SQA. By doing so, the project not only filled a key policy and operational gap but also paved the way for standardized training delivery. This development now enables the training to be aligned with NSDA certification, allowing learners to gain nationally recognized qualifications in a high-demand ICT trade.

Potential benefits and broader impacts

One feature of the NSDA framework is that once a curriculum is approved, it is treated as a public asset—available for use by any Registered Training Organisation. This model can reduce the cost and administrative burden on smaller institutions, who would otherwise need to develop their own materials from scratch. It also opens the door to greater collaboration across institutions and industries.

Certification under the NSDA framework is also intended to enhance the employability of trainees, both domestically

and internationally. Additional employment opportunities may also arise through the training system itself. As more training institutions seek registration and alignment with NSDA standards, there will be demand for assessors and trainers accredited under the national framework.

Implementation and next steps

New trades are constantly emerging in the ICT and Agro-processing sectors to meet the growing demands of niche markets and innovative products and services introduced by the industry. To keep up with these rapidly evolving sectors, it is essential that we act swiftly to update our regulatory frameworks—particularly in areas like certification processes and competency standards. Without timely reforms, our youth will remain unprepared to meet the skill requirements of the global market, limiting their employability and competitiveness.

With Bangladesh expecting to add millions more workers to its labour force over the next decade, ensuring the consistency and quality of skills training will remain a central concern for policymakers and educators alike.

The BYETS project is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and implemented by Swisscontact.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

Marico Bangladesh Ltd.

Assistant Manager, Operations

Deadline: N/A

Eligibility:

🔵 BSc in Electrical Engineering with prior experience in manufacturing, production/maintenance.

Minimum experience: 4-5 years



HSBC

Client Relationship Support Associate, Corporate & Institutional Banking

Deadline: May 21

Eligibility:

🔵 Bachelor's degree from a public/private university with prior experience in banking operations, particularly in corporate and institutional banking, credit or risk.

Minimum experience: N/A



Social Marketing Company (SMC)

Program Officer, Field Operation

Deadline: May 24

Eligibility:

🔵 Graduation/Master's degree in any discipline.

Minimum experience: 1 year



Danish Refugee Council (DRC)

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) Officer

Deadline: May 21

Eligibility:

🔵 Bachelor's/Master's degree in Social Sciences, Statistics, Economics, Public Administration, Development studies, or relevant work experience.

Minimum experience: 3 years



FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.



University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh



Director, Center for Sustainable Development

Deadline: May 24

Eligibility: Ph.D. in Environmental Science, Sustainability Studies, Geography, Anthropology, Sociology, Development Studies, or related field from a reputed international university.

Minimum Experience: 8 years

Star

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 20, 2025, JAISHTHA 6, 1432 BS

SPORT

What to WATCH

T SPORTS

Bangladesh Premier League
Fakirerpool vs Bashundhara Kings
Live from 4:00pm
IPL

Chennai VS Rajasthan
Live from 8:00pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
English Premier League
Manchester City vs Bournemouth

Live from 1:00am (Wednesday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD2
English Premier League
Crystal Palace vs Wolves

Ballon d'Or to introduce gender parity

AFP, Paris

The Ballon d'Or award ceremony will take place on September 22 this year and the number of awards for women and men will be equal for the first time, organisers said on Monday.

Awards for best women's goalkeeper, best young women's player and the top women's scorer in a club or national team have been added to the list this year for the ceremony at the Theatre du Chatelet in Paris, France Football magazine and UEFA said.

That means there will be six awards for male players and six for female players, with an additional prize, the Socrates Award, for actions that promote solidarity, which is open to men or women.

The nominees will be announced in early August.

Last year's awards ceremony was overshadowed by a boycott by Real Madrid after they learned that their Brazilian forward Vinicius Junior had not won the best men's player award, which went to Rodri of Manchester City.



UAE captain Muhammad Waseem celebrates scoring his fifty en route to a decisive 42-ball 82, which paved the way for his team's series-levelling two-wicket victory over Bangladesh in the second and penultimate T20I at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium yesterday. The match went down to the wire, with the hosts chasing down the Tigers' 205 for five with one delivery to spare.

PHOTO: EMIRATES CRICKET

Molten becomes BFF's official football partner

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday signed a three-year partnership with Japan-based Molten Corporation -- a renowned manufacturer of sports equipment and automotive parts -- naming the company as its official football partner.

The agreement comes nearly three months after BFF appointed local brand Dour as the national team's kit partner.

This marks the first time BFF has formalised such a deal, with BFF vice-president Fahad Karim and Takashi Ozaki, leader of the Molten Asian Group, signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on behalf of their respective organisations at the BFF House.

Under the deal, Bangladesh will purchase 2,000 Molten footballs annually at a discounted rate. Molten will also provide an additional 2,000 footballs free of charge each year.



In recent years, BFF has already been using Molten footballs across various competitions, purchasing 3,130 footballs last year alone.

"I'm very happy because I had a lot of discussions with Fahad and finally, I am here to support Bangladesh Football Federation so that they can strengthen the national football team," Ozaki told reporters at the BFF House.

Fahad noted that BFF usually purchases footballs for competitions using funds from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), and the new agreement with Molten will save them Tk 50 lakh annually, which will be spent on buying other equipment in line with suggestions from the technical and national teams committees.

'Difficult situation' eased as Tigers avoid return trip

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) received a welcome boost yesterday as Emirates Cricket Board confirmed an additional T20I to the ongoing series in Sharjah.

The third and final match will now be held on May 21 at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium, turning what was initially a two-match affair into a three-match series.

The decision came after a formal request from the BCB, which is currently in the final stages of discussions with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) regarding a separate T20I series in Pakistan.

Bangladesh are slated to open their campaign against Pakistan on May 27, according to the draft revised itinerary. Initially, the plan was to bring the team home after the UAE tour, which was scheduled to end yesterday. That would have meant flying the players back to Bangladesh and then again to Pakistan within a matter of days -- a costly and tiring process.

Not only did it raise concerns over player fatigue and logistical complications, it would have incurred significant travel and accommodation expenses.

The approval from UAE Cricket changed the picture. The additional fixture means the team can now stay on in the UAE before heading straight to Pakistan, avoiding the back-and-forth journey and



trimming down the overall cost.

"If we had returned home and then travelled to Pakistan again five or six days later, it would've put a lot of physical strain on the players," said Itekhhar Rahman Mithu, chairman of the BCB's media and communications committee, explaining the board's reasoning to The Daily Star.

He also pointed out the financial burden: "Secondly, the price of flight tickets would be also huge. Thirdly, if we send the team early in Pakistan, they will remain confined in the hotel room for a few days."

Highlighting the cost-effectiveness of the current arrangement, he added, "If you stay at Dubai for an additional seven days, where each room costs around 300 dollars, it will be around USD 52 to 60 thousand additional cost

for hotel rooms.

"So we requested the UAE for an additional T20I and they will now bear the cost until May 22."

As for the Pakistan leg of the tour, Mithu noted that discussions are still ongoing regarding the number of matches to be played. There appears to be a split in opinion within the squad.

"A few players talked about reducing the number of matches while some players agreed to play all matches. But Pakistan are the host team. So overall, we are in a difficult situation," he admitted.

Mithu further informed that the tentative plan for Bangladesh contingent is to reach Pakistan on May 24, with the series expected to conclude by June 5 as the board is mindful of the Eid holidays and the subsequent tour of Sri Lanka.

WOMEN'S EMERGING TEAMS' ASIA CUP BCB waiting for ACC confirmation

SPORTS REPORTER

A women's wing official of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday said that they are expecting information regarding upcoming Women's Emerging Teams' Asia Cup from the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) by this week.

The tournament is scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka from June 6, but the recent India Pakistan conflict has cast doubts over the tournament's fate.

Recent media reports suggested that India have decided to pull out from the upcoming ACC events. However, a BCCI official on Monday denied making any such decision regarding upcoming ACC events.

"The ACC has told us that the tournament will go on as per schedule. But they have asked for a week's time," Bulbul Bashar, BCB's women's wing in-charge, told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, the official informed that they are facing difficulties to arrange international series of the national women's team ahead of the upcoming ICC Women's World Cup in October and may opt to play a challenge series as part of preparation.

"We may play a challenge series. There can be three teams. We may also play against the U-17 boys," he said.

SHORT CORNER

Miraz granted NOC to play in PSL

Off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz, unpicked for Bangladesh T20I series against UAE and Pakistan, received a NOC from the board (BCB) today to play for Lahore Qalandars in Pakistan Super League.

Messi urges unity as Miami face testing times

Inter Miami skipper Lionel Messi urged his teammates to "stay united" after a crushing 3-0 defeat to Orlando City on Sunday night -- the club's fifth loss in their last seven matches.

*Read full stories on The Daily Star's website



Jamie Vardy, alongside his family members, takes a lap of appreciation from the King Power Stadium crowd after playing his last match for Leicester City following Sunday's 2-0 victory against Ipswich. On his 500th and final appearance for the club, Vardy scored his 200th goal for the Foxes, ending a remarkable spell which included a stunning Premier League title triumph in 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Dembele channelling Michael Jordan in glory hunt

AGENCIES

If someone had told Ousmane Dembele at the start of the 2024/25 season that he'd be PSG's top scorer, Ligue 1's Golden Boot winner, and leading the line as a central striker -- all while largely avoiding injury -- he might've laughed it off.

But now, 33 goals later, that unthinkable script has turned into a blockbuster season for the 27-year-old Frenchman.

From a mercurial winger often plagued by fitness setbacks to a clinical, high-output centre-forward, Dembele's transformation has been nothing short of remarkable.

"I don't know if I'm in my prime," he told FIFA.com. "But I do feel like I'm playing well this season. I'm much more clinical. It's all because of my new role."

His reinvention has given Paris Saint-Germain more than just goals -- it's injected belief into a team chasing a historic treble.

With the Ligue 1 title already secured, Dembele now stares down three final hurdles: the French Cup final against Reims on May 24, the



UEFA Champions League final against Inter Milan on May 31, and the inaugural 32-team FIFA Club World Cup in the United States next month.

"This [Club] World Cup will be really special," Dembele said. "It comes just before the World Cup for the national teams. It's going to be massive and we can't wait to get there."

Credit, he's quick to add, also belongs to PSG coach Luis Enrique. "The coach has always believed in me

since the day I arrived," said Dembele. "He shared his plans for me as a player. He has every bit of confidence in me, and I try to pay him back on the pitch."

Now, as he prepares to lead PSG into the most crucial stretch of the season, Dembele is inspired by legends, particularly one from the basketball world.

"Michael Jordan is the greatest in my opinion," he said. "His leadership and all the trophies he has won -- I saw everything he did in The Last Dance. He was incredible."

And when asked about the footballing icon he'd dream of playing alongside, Dembele didn't hesitate: "Zinedine Zidane. He is France's greatest player of all time. Technically gifted, and I believe he would have provided me with excellent opportunities."

Much like Zidane before him, Dembele now carries French hopes -- and PSG's -- on the global stage. With silverware in sight and history within grasp, the boy who once couldn't stay fit now looks like the man made for the moment.

Most difficult season of career, says Conte

REUTERS

Napoli manager Antonio Conte laid bare the emotional toll of a gruelling title race, admitting that the season had pushed him beyond his limits as his side prepares for one final push towards the Serie A title.

Their penultimate match of the campaign was a rollercoaster, ending in a 0-0 draw at Parma on Sunday that saw them hit the woodwork and have a stoppage-time penalty overturned after a lengthy VAR check.

In the end, Napoli head into the final round with a one-point lead over second-placed Inter Milan, but 55-year-old manager Conte admitted the season was taking a toll on him.

Inter's final fixture is at Como who are finishing their first Serie A season in over two decades in great form, although Cesc Fabregas' team's winning streak ended at six matches with a 1-1 draw at safe Verona.

Napoli were saved from being overtaken by Inter thanks to a Pedro brace for Lazio, including a 90th-minute penalty.

"It is certainly the most difficult season of my career," Conte told DAZN.

"I gave everything, I went beyond my limits. I also know I am exhausted, I'm just about reaching the end of this season.

"Napoli is wonderful for the passion and

enthusiasm, but it also brings with it demands and expectations that are often higher than the realistic capabilities."

Napoli can secure their second title in three years at home against Cagliari next Friday.

"We are close to the Scudetto, but we still have to take that final step. It will be taken on our home turf, with the support of our fans," Conte told DAZN.

"It is a very difficult campaign, we have achieved what we wanted to do, which was to trouble the leaders to the end."

"We have been at the top for a long time, despite a season full of difficulties, but we never complained, we kept going and we are right there to achieve something unthinkable and historic for Napoli."

Yet due to his red card in the final minutes of the Parma match, Conte will not be on the bench against Cagliari after what looked like a scuffle with Parma coach Cristian

Chivu.

"I was annoyed by Parma's obstruction today, as I was used to English football, where there aren't all these stops for cramp, injuries, pretending to be injured, so it irritated me and that's why I was sent off," he said.

"It irritates me, because you work all year to have a decisive match. I trust the staff and these lads, I above all trust the crowd at the Stadio Maradona."



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Outrage, shock over Nusraat Faria's arrest

Actor sent to jail; home boss defends arrest, Farooki calls it 'embarrassing'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent actor Nusraat Faria to jail in connection with an attempted murder case linked to the July uprising.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Sarah Farzana Haque passed the order after police produced her before the court.

The court set May 22 to hear the bail petition after her lawyer Iftekhar Hossain submitted her travel documents and stated that she had been in Canada between July 9 and August 13, when the offence occurred in Dhaka's Bhatara area.

Meanwhile, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury has defended her arrest, saying, "If a case is pending against her, what can you do?"

Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, on the other hand, said, "The arrest of Nusraat Faria is an embarrassing incident for us."

The arrest has drawn widespread criticism from artistes and cultural figures, especially those who were vocal during the July uprising.



SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



In quiet despair, a man sits amid the charred ruins of his home in the Bhasantek new slum in the capital's Mirpur-13 yesterday. The two chickens beside him are all he could save from the blaze that tore through the slum on Sunday evening.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Act against advisers 'out to destabilise the country'

BNP urges Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said the party has urged Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus to take action against certain advisers who are "conspiring to destabilise the country".

"We've informed the chief adviser of their activities. Now he must act," he said while inaugurating BNP's membership drive at Sylhet Shilpakala Academy.

Addressing the chief adviser, Salahuddin said, "I am speaking softly, honourable chief adviser. Maybe it will reach your ears; maybe not. If it does, that's good. But if you choose not to listen, it will be bad for everyone."

The BNP leader further said, "The path you are walking is undemocratic. You are speaking in a language that opposes democracy, and your actions go against the rule of law."

He called on the chief adviser to honour the pledge to hold the national

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Inter-ministerial meet today on Indian curbs

Goods-laden trucks stranded at land ports

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The commerce ministry has convened an inter-ministerial meeting today to work out ways to address India's restrictions on imports from Bangladesh through land ports.

Speaking to this correspondent over the phone yesterday, Md Abdur Rahim Khan, additional secretary (export) at the commerce ministry, said the government would take a decision in consultation with senior officials of the relevant ministries and departments on how to respond to the curbs on Indian port use for the shipment of Bangladeshi goods.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi exporters remain anxious as goods-laden vehicles are still stranded at various land ports along the border.

Humayun Rashid, chairman of Energypac Fashions Ltd, said three trucks carrying garments for India have been waiting to be unloaded at Benapole land port since Saturday, when the restrictions were imposed.

"We are expecting a positive outcome within the next day or two, as my Indian importer has been working seriously to release the goods from the port," he said, adding that he will decide on upcoming consignments to India in consultation with the importer.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

Over 48,400 arrested in one month

MUNTAKIM SAAD and SHAMHEEN MOLLAH

Police have arrested over 48,400 people across the country over the last one month, according to data from the Police Headquarters.

On average, the number of daily arrests over the past month stood at around 1,560 -- a figure higher than that recorded during "Operation Devil Hunt" earlier this year, which saw an average of around 1,330 arrests per day.

The highest number of arrests in a day, 2,271, was on May 10, just two days after former president Abdul Hamid left the country, sparking protests from various political and religious groups.

On May 12, the government officially banned all activities of the Awami League and its affiliated bodies on allegations of killings, crimes against humanity, and other grave offences during the July uprising.

Since then, law enforcement agencies have stepped up their actions, arresting AL leaders and activists, including several former lawmakers.

Shahjada Md Ashadujjaman, additional deputy inspector general (operations) at the Police Headquarters, told The Daily Star that the number of arrests has risen recently -- not due to any special drive, but because police have

"Members of banned political parties attempting to continue their activities are also being detained, contributing to the rise."

SHAHJADA MD ASHADUJAMAN Addl DIG at PHQ

(reserved seat-49, Cumilla), and Shamima Akhter Khanom alias Shamima Shahriar (reserved seat-21, Sunamganj).

Besides, former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor and also AL leader Salina Hayat Ivy was arrested on May 9 following a night-long raid at her residence.

Outside Dhaka, drives by police against AL members are also ongoing. Several union parishad chairmen in different areas have also been detained.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Yunus to visit UK on June 9

PORIMOL PALMA

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is set to visit the UK on June 9-13 and will likely hold meetings with King Charles and Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

The detailed schedule and agenda of the visit to London are being worked out, said a foreign ministry official.

Repatriation of laundered money, trade and investment, development partnership, Rohingya crisis and regional cooperation in South Asia will be on the agenda during the trip, The Daily Star has learnt from diplomatic sources in London and Dhaka.

Top officials from the Bangladesh Bank and Anti-Corruption Commission, among others, will be accompanying him during the visit to discuss ways to repatriate the laundered money.

The UK has been one of the major destinations for the laundered money from Bangladesh.

"This will be a high priority visit after the China tour from political, economic and global perspectives," said a

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Liberation War founding pillar of the state

Nahid says NCP stands against religious extremism and secularist ideologies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asserting that the Liberation War is one of the founding pillars of the state, National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam yesterday said his party does not subscribe to religious extremism or secularist ideologies.

"NCP's journey is based on the ideals of equality, justice, and human dignity that arose from the Liberation War and the aspiration for a discrimination-free and democratic state system born from the 2024 mass uprising."

He also said the party considers the continuation of the struggle by Bangladeshis against colonialism and elitism as its political and historical basis as well.

In a Facebook post, titled "NCP's perspectives on several issues", Nahid outlined the party's positions on various matters, stating that the NCP respects citizens' religious beliefs and spiritual sentiments.

"The religion of the majority is Islam--its ethics and humanism, as well as the language, culture, and lifestyle of Bangalee Muslims, are valued by the NCP. NCP will ensure the protection of the religious, cultural, and civic rights of minority religious and ethnic communities. NCP believes the state should preserve the religious and cultural integrity of every community."

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



WORLD BEE DAY

The hum beneath our harvests

NAZIBA BASHIER

In a country where rice paddies stretch endlessly and mustard fields glow golden, the soft hum of bees often fills the air. These tiny creatures -- nature's most vital workers -- are the quiet pulse beneath our harvests.

Globally, the buzz is fading. But in Asia, a rare story of resilience is unfolding.

As we mark World Bee Day today, the question before us is urgent: what more can we do to protect and promote healthy bee populations -- not just globally, but here at home?

Bees are more than honey-makers. They are the backbone of our food system. Nearly 75 percent of global crops depend, at least partly, on pollination -- and bees are the most efficient pollinators. From fruits and vegetables to oilseeds and pulses, the presence of bees directly shapes our diets.

Encouragingly, Asia has shown a more hopeful trend than much of the world. While Western



PHOTO: TITU DAS

nations report sharp declines in bee populations, countries like China -- the world's top honey producer with over 400,000 metric tons harvested annually -- are seeing stability or growth. Rich biodiversity, longstanding beekeeping traditions, and growing commercial interest have all played a role.

Bangladesh, too, has seen steady progress. According to the Bangladesh Sugarcrop Research Institute, as of 2017, 1,551 beekeepers were managing 42,911 bee boxes across the country. Mustard fields hosted the highest concentration, reflecting the crop's significance to bees. This structured beekeeping not only boosts honey yields but also improves pollination, strengthening food security.

Yet, this progress is fragile. The most pressing threat comes from pesticides. Chemicals like neonicotinoids are used freely across our farmlands, often with little awareness. These

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Palestinian women and children make their way with their belongings as they flee their homes after the Israeli military issued evacuation orders for eastern Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP